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OF GREAT BRITAIN

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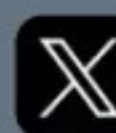


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CONTENTS

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REGULARS

06 News and events

What's happening in the world of diecast collecting.

36 Then and Now

Steve Coles continues his series comparing vintage models with their present day counterparts.

39 Collecting by Numbers

Charting the evolution of the Matchbox Superfast range during the Lesney years, from 1969 to 1982.

40 A-Z of Diecast

In which Alwyn Brice continues his series, leafing through the alphabet of diecasts.

42 Corgi Through The Years

Rick Wilson continues his series of year-by-year articles from the beginning of the Corgi brand in 1956.

51 Top Vintage Model

DTCA Chairman, Michael Driver, picks another vintage favourite from Dinky.

58 Your Models

A pictorial snapshot of your prized diecast models and collections.

59 Dear Editor

Your diecast-related questions shared.

62 Toy Tales

Ed Karswell ponders the wonderful world of model collecting.



24

NEW MODELS

10 What's New

Seven pages looking at the latest new models and in-depth reviews.

18 VW Beetle Jeans

Stephen Paul Hardy gets nostalgic thanks to an unexpected release from Solido.

FEATURES

20 The dream racing car

Francisco Mota looks at privateer teams that gave Porsche most of the 935's best racing results.

24 A new Škoda 130 fresh from Fox18

Alex Winson finds out if this new range of Czech 1/64 scale models will stand up in an already saturated miniature market.

28 Fiat EV models

As electric cars becoming increasingly popular, Kevin Brock looks at where it all started and the scale replicas in production today.

32 Renault 1000kg vans

Andrew Ralston takes a look at a popular post-World War Two era delivery van, and the models that followed.



18

DIECAST

COLLECTOR

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47 The Lledo Story

Paul Lumsdon revisits the early days of the Lledo company as we look back over more than 40 years of quality diecast models.

AUCTIONS

52 Price Guide

Value your collection with auction results from around the country.

60 Toy Fair Times

News of upcoming auctions and events that you might want to put in your diary.

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NEWS

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HOT WHEELS REVEALS NEW FORMULA 1 LINE

FOLLOWING the success of its first limited edition Formula 1® car in 2024, Mattel has unveiled an expanded Hot Wheels Formula 1® collection, set to launch in 2025. Announced ahead of the Nuremberg International Toy Fair, the collection features all eight Formula 1® teams across Hot Wheels Singles, 5-pack, and Premium series.

Each 1/64 diecast car is designed for racing on Hot Wheels' signature orange track, with the premium models featuring metal bodies, authentic team liveries, and Pirelli-branded tyres for a realistic touch. Fans can also experience the thrill of F1 racing at home with new track sets. The Hot Wheels Formula 1® Sprint & Grand Prix Race Circuit sets come with a throttle pedal booster and manual DRS diverter for competitive, high-speed action.

"The response from fans has been incredible," said Roberto Stanichi, Mattel's EVP of Hot Wheels. "We're bringing the worlds of Hot Wheels and F1 together like never before."

Formula 1's Chief Commercial Officer Emily Prazer added: "These intricately designed cars allow fans to experience the excitement of F1 in their own hands."

The new collection hits shelves from Summer 2025, with prices starting from just £2.30. ■

MATRIX ANNOUNCES 1938 ASTON MARTIN

MATRIX is set to release a 1/43 scale model of the 1938 Aston Martin 15-98 2-4 Seater, expected in early 2025. This classic car, originally unveiled at the 1937 Earls Court Motor Show and built by Abbey Coachworks, was powered by a 1950cc OHC 4-cylinder engine, with only 50 units produced.

The model will be available in grey (MX40108-171), red (MX40108-172), and black



(MX40108-173). Pricing details have yet to be confirmed, but you can secure yours through Spa Croft Models (www.spacraftmodels.co.uk) or your preferred retailer. ■



NEW 'SEA DOG' BUSES FROM EFE ROAD

EFE Road has announced the first five of its long-awaited new 1/76 scale Leyland Atlantean 'Sea Dog' open top double decker buses as part of Bachmann Europe Plc's Spring 2025 British Railway Announcements.

The full-size 'Sea Dogs' were built for the well-known operator, Devon General, which had begun running regular open top bus tours of the Torbay area in the summer of 1955. However, in 1961 Devon General introduced a fleet of nine specially built Leyland Atlanteans with Metro-Cammell bodies, each seating 75 passengers. Each was named after an historical naval or maritime figure, which quickly earned them the nickname 'Sea Dogs'.

In their distinctive cream and red livery, they became a familiar sight on the 12A-12D routes serving Torquay, Paignton, Brixham, Babbacombe and Kingswear, and carried generations of holidaymakers for the next 20 years. They were built as convertibles, with detachable roofs, meaning that they could operate as normal double deckers during the low season.

The five new EFE Road 'Sea Dogs' represent examples of the type during various stages of their post-Devon General careers. The models feature a newly tooled upper deck with metal handrails, separately fitted metal bodyside destination banner boards (where applicable), and the latter style of lower positioned, one man operation route blinds. Two patterns of rear engine bustle are also included in the tooling suite, and the models also carry wing mirrors for the first time on an EFE Leyland Atlantean.

The new models are:

- **E40601 – Leyland Atlantean Open Top Western National NBC 926 926GTA**
- **E40602 – Leyland Atlantean Open Top Ribble 1927 927GTA**
- **E40603 – Leyland Atlantean Open Top First Glasgow 39989 ABV669A**
- **E40801 – Leyland Atlantean Open Top Round London Sightseeing 933GTA**
- **E40803 – Leyland Atlantean Open Top Red Bus NBC 925 925GTA**

EFE Road spokesman, Gary Boyd-Hope, said: "It is a great pleasure to finally bring the first of the 'Sea Dogs' to market after such a long time, and we thank collectors for their patience. The models make a very welcome addition to the expanding EFE Road range, offering striking colour schemes and geographical interest beyond their original West Country stamping ground, and help capture the joy of holidays gone by."

The five models are expected to reach retailers during Spring 2025, with an RRP of £44.95. ■

TIME TO BUCKLE UP!

FOLLOWING its 60th anniversary milestone, Majorette is taking its diecast car collection up a gear for fans in 2025. This month sees the release of a new limited edition Graffiti lineup, a Black Edition Gift Pack, and the electrifying Rimac Nevera Gift Pack.

Available in a 5-piece gift box (RRP £15.99) or as single cars (RRP £2.99), the limited edition Graffiti vehicles will make a fun and vibrant addition to any collection. From the neon yellow Nissan Z with its blue rims to the souped-up Renault Megane R.S., Majorette fans will want to get their hands on these 1/64 scale cars before it's too late.

And who wouldn't want to see the new Black Edition 2.0 gift pack (RRP £15.99) zoom into their collection? Including a Toyota GR Supra 3.0, Bugatti Chiron Pur Sport, Land Rover Defender 90, GMC

Hummer EV and Lamborghini Sian FKP 37, all in 1/64, these diecast cars will add a stylish edge to your Majorette fleet.

To top it all off, look out this spring for the Rimac Nevera 5 Car Gift Pack (RRP £15.99). These 1/64 scale vehicles will speed off the shelves, almost as fast as the real deal.

The new launches are all sure to impress, and fans can expect high quality, true to life detail, and working features such as opening parts and suspension.

Majorette has a lot in the pipeline this year – follow @**SimbaToysUK** on Instagram and Facebook for all the latest releases, and shop the range on Amazon www.amazon.co.uk/s?k=Majorette ■



MINI GT UK SOCIAL MEDIA LAUNCH



CLEVELANDS Wholesale, sole official UK importers of MINI GT, has created a social media presence on Facebook, highlighting all the upcoming releases and new model announcements, mixed with articles about current ranges and an archive of previous model reviews.

To keep up to date with all the news about this hugely popular range of 1/64 scale models, visit <https://www.facebook.com/MINIGTUKofficial/> and hit the "Like" button to get updates in your news feed. ■



1971 LE MANS WINNER UNVEILED BY POCHER

POCHER has unveiled the Porsche 917KH – 1971 Le Mans Winner – MARTINI® Edition, a stunning 1/8 scale diecast metal model kit that allows collectors and motorsport enthusiasts to recreate one of the most iconic race cars in history. With over 316 detailed parts, over 200 screws and more than 30 hours of build time, this officially licensed complete model kit offers a true-to-life replica of the Porsche 917KH that triumphed at the 1971 Le Mans 24 Hours.

The Porsche 917KH is renowned for its groundbreaking aerodynamic design and exceptional performance on the track. Powered by a flat-12 engine, the 917KH was a force to be reckoned with, particularly during the 1971 Le Mans race, driven by Gijs van Lennep and Helmut Marko where it secured Porsche's second overall victory for two years running. The car's lightweight build and remarkable engineering allowed it to achieve record-breaking speeds and performance, making it one of the most celebrated

cars in endurance racing history.

The MARTINI Racing livery, with its iconic blue, red, and white stripes, is faithfully recreated on the model, adding a striking visual element that pays homage to the car's historic success. This model also features moving parts, including working suspension, fully functional steering, and opening doors and a clamshell engine cover, providing an interactive and engaging build experience.

Assembling the Pocher Porsche 917KH – MARTINI Edition is not just a model-building challenge but also an opportunity to experience the engineering brilliance and racing heritage of one of motorsport's greatest machines. This detailed model kit offers a rewarding project for both seasoned model builders and collectors, culminating in a stunning display piece that celebrates automotive excellence.

For more information about this, or other models from the Pocher range, visit <https://uk.pocher.com/products/porsche-917kh-martini-edition-hk122>. ■

NEWS

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HOT WHEELS & FERRARI TEAM UP AGAIN



MATTEL INC announced at the Nuremberg International Toy Fair a renewed partnership between Hot Wheels® and Ferrari, marking the return of the legendary Prancing Horse to Hot Wheels products for the first time in over a decade. This collaboration will feature an extensive lineup of Ferrari models, from timeless classics to cutting-edge vehicles, including both road and racing cars. The first collection is set to launch this summer, with additional product releases planned throughout 2025 and beyond.

Since its founding in 1968, Hot Wheels has collaborated with Ferrari multiple times, releasing 26 unique models, many of which have become prized collectibles. The new lineup will build on this legacy, offering 1/64 scale diecast cars available worldwide, high-end limited editions through Mattel Creations, and remote-controlled models.

As part of this launch, Ferrari collectibles will be sold exclusively on the newly introduced Mattel Creations UK platform. This dedicated site will offer premium and limited-edition items with faster next-day delivery, easy returns, and a localized shopping experience for collectors. "Bringing Ferrari back into the Hot Wheels lineup was a passion project for our team," said Roberto Stanichi, Executive Vice President of Hot Wheels. "We are excited to showcase these iconic designs for both collectors and new fans alike."

For more details, visit uk.creations.mattel.com and www.hotwheels.com. ■

TWO NEW MATRIX MODELS FOR 2025

MATRIX has announced two new 1/43 scale models set for release in the second quarter of 2025. The first is the Triumph TR6 Shooting Brake, a rare estate-style conversion of the classic British sports car. Available in blue (MX41902-021), red (MX41902-022), and yellow (MX41902-023), these models replicate unique one-off versions. Although Triumph never officially produced a TR6 estate, photographic evidence confirms their existence, including a blue example created by German owner Bernd Amling.

The second release is the 1964 Lotus Elan 26R Le Mans Coupe, Ian Walker Racing edition. It will be available in three versions: gold No. 62 (MXR41209-011), driven by Jackie Stewart to a class win at the Prix de Paris; gold No. 128 (MXR41209-012), which crashed in practice at the Nürburgring 1000km; and a green model (MXR41209-013) with a yellow stripe. Ian Walker Racing developed the 26R for Le Mans, but it never competed due to the Nürburgring accident.

Pricing details have yet to be confirmed, but you can secure yours through Spa Croft Models (www.spacraftmodels.co.uk) or your preferred retailer. ■



NEXT MONTH



Remembering quintessentially English luxury cars of the 1960s

Rover 3-Litre and 3.5-Litre, which ooze an aura of traditional craftsmanship and grandeur

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1 APRIL**

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MAY 2025
Issue 331

PLUS...

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- Auction results
- All the latest news
- Extensive selection of new model releases
- And much more...

Please note: These planned editorial contents may be subject to change where necessary.



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MINI GT



MGT00894-L - 1/64 BMW 750iL
SORRENTO BLUE METALLIC (LHD)
ALSO AVAILABLE IN BLISTER PACKAGING AND RHD



MGT00959-L - 1/64 BMW i7 XDRIVE60
ALPINE WHITE/BLACK SAPPHIRE (LHD)
ALSO AVAILABLE IN BLISTER PACKAGING AND RHD



MGT00966-L - 1/64 LAMBORGHINI COUNTACH
LB*WORKS WHITE 2024 TOKYO AUTO SALON
ALSO AVAILABLE IN BLISTER PACKAGING



MGT00967-R - 1/64 LAMBORGHINI HURACAN
LB*WORKS VER.2 MAD MIKE NUMBUL (RHD)
ALSO AVAILABLE IN BLISTER PACKAGING



MGT00968-L - 1/64 BUGATTI EB110 GT
VERDE SCURO (LHD)
ALSO AVAILABLE IN BLISTER PACKAGING



MGT00974-L - 1/64 FORD PUMA RALLY1 #13
M-SPORT FORD WRT 2024 RALLY MONTE CARLO
ALSO AVAILABLE IN BLISTER PACKAGING

KAIDO ★ HOUSE



MGTKHMG167 - 1/64 NISSAN SKYLINE GT-R (R34)
TAMIYA X KAIDO HOUSE THE GRASSHOPPER V1



MGTKHMG174 - 1/64 CHEVROLET SILVERADO
KAIDO HKS V1



MGTKHMG177 - 1/64 BMW M3
KAIDOHAUS V1



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What's new...

Our team of experts take a look at this month's model releases, including fine handbuilt replicas, scale construction and the latest in farm models.

WE EXPECT YOU TO BUY, MR BOND! MINI GT'S FIRST 007 RELEASES HAVE ARRIVED...

Anounced in time for the 2024 Nuremberg Toy Fair, the first releases of MINI GT's superb 007 Collection have now arrived. Starting with the iconic Aston Martin DB5 (nothing else could really have been considered for the first releases), the initial releases come as a pair, sold individually.

MGT00900-007E is a model of the most famous of movie car's first appearance in the film franchise, in *Goldfinger* (1964). MGT00901-007E represents the car's second starring role the following year, in *Thunderball* (1965). The version from *Goldfinger* has the car's special 'Q' features deployed, but the *Thunderball* version is a 'clean' DB5 with none of them activated. The DB5 really needs little introduction as the most iconic of 007's rides and there will be two further releases later in the collection, as it appeared in the later *Casino Royale* and *No Time To Die* films.

The deployed features included on the *Goldfinger* version are the extended bumper overrider rams (front and rear), the Browning machine guns hidden behind the front sidelights, the bullet-proof shield that protects the rear screen and the extendable tyre-slasher to the nearside rear wheel. Both models come in special blister packaging, which features genuine movie poster artwork. Each release will come in a number of versions, with alternative movie posters for different markets. For example, the *Goldfinger* model has also been released with French

MINI GT
Aston Martin DB5
"Goldfinger" &
"Thunderball"

SCALE: 1/64

PRICE: £18.49 each

REF: MGT00900-007E
& MGT00901-007E

www.clevelands
diecast.co.uk



ABOVE
Note the extended tyre
slasher, bumper overrider
rams and raised bullet
shield on the *Goldfinger*
version (left).

(MGT00900-007F) and Japanese (MGT00900-007J) promotional artwork. The *Thunderball* version can also be found in French (MGT00901-007F), Japanese (MGT00901-007J) and Spanish (MGT00901-007S) versions.

The packaging box showcases a sleek silhouette of the model car, paired with a unique logo that matches the poster featured on the backcard. This integration of modern and classic design elements makes the packaging as collectible as the models themselves. MINI GT chose gold for the logo because *Goldfinger* was the first 007 movie to ignite the iconic Bond car culture, making it a cornerstone of the franchise's history. Last year marked the 60th anniversary of *Goldfinger* and the chrome gold accents were chosen to honour this milestone, symbolising both the elegance and prestige of James Bond and his cars.

The MINI GT 007 Collection is a celebration of cinematic and automotive history, combining authenticity, artistry, and storytelling into every detail. The models certainly live up to this accolade and are superbly finished with some really good detail, especially at this scale.

MINI GT's models are available worldwide and are imported to the UK exclusively through Cleveland's Wholesale (www.clevelandsdiecast.co.uk), a Trade Only wholesaler. So, if you're a retail customer, get in touch with your preferred point of sale. ■

BELOW
The two releases contrast
nicely with the *Goldfinger*
car (left) featuring deployed
gadgetry and the *Thunderball*
release (right) being a clean,
standard DB5.





MATRIX MODELS
1937 Bugatti T 57 S Atlantic coupe - blue/grey
SCALE: 1/43 PRICE: £120 REF: MX40205-111

www.matrixscalemodels.com

A fine model of this classic Bugatti. Very well detailed, down to the central rib, Parisian number plates, and a lovely interior, in two-tone tan/beige.



GOLDVARG
1967 Pontiac Bonneville 4-door Hardtop - Tyrol Blue Metallic
SCALE: 1/43 PRICE: £125 REF: GC 059A

www.goldvargcollection.com

The sweeping "Coke-bottle" style of the rear wings, and the unusual frontal treatment with its stacked headlights of the original are well replicated.



GOLDVARG
1967 Pontiac Bonneville 4-door Hardtop - champagne/white
SCALE: 1/43 PRICE: £125 REF: GC 059B

www.goldvargcollection.com

Spectacularly-styled late '60s Pontiac is in metallic light gold with white vinyl-effect roof, and toning cold interior. Again, all the detail is there, inside and out.



CORGI MODEL CLUB
Oldsmobile Super 88
SCALE: 1/49 PRICE: £33.99 REF: 235

www.soxx

This attractive standard saloon version of Corgi's classic casting was introduced into the range in 1962. The interior from the staff car has been used in this version.

HERE AT LAST – ESVAL'S PEERLESS PEERLESS!

The Peerless GT started in 1956 as a project by Jimmy Byrnes and Bernie Rodger, originally as a 2-seat coupe. They built the car using Triumph TR3 mechanicals, and Byrnes showed the finished car to his friend, car dealer John Gordon. He was impressed, but suggested its commercial viability could be improved by making it slightly larger and as a 2+2. A second car was built to this configuration, and exhibited at the 1957 Paris Motor Show, from whence it gained the approval of Standard-Triumph, necessary for continued component supply. The Peerless Motors premises in Slough, previously a large Jaguar dealership, became the factory, and the car's name was changed from the original 'Warwick' (after the county where Byrnes' hotel business was based) to 'Peerless'.

The first cars were launched in May 1958 to wide acclaim and, despite the Peerless costing almost £500 more than the Triumph TR3 itself, it was so popular that bigger premises on the adjacent Slough Trading Estate were needed to facilitate production. To add to its popularity, a car entered in the 1958 Le Mans 24-hour race achieved a remarkable class win and 16th place overall. In July 1959 a "Phase 2" version was announced, with a one-piece bodyshell, minor styling changes and a revised grille.

A little later that year though, a boardroom row

ESVAL
1958 - 60
PEERLESS G.T.

PRICE: £90.00
SCALE: 1/24
REF: EMEU 43007A-D

www.esvalmodels.com



led to John Gordon resigning, and this ultimately led to the demise of the company, after some 300 Peerless cars had been sold. The firm was reformed however and through 1960-61, around 25 examples of a modified and updated version of the Peerless were built under the old name of "Warwick GT".

The new Esval is an excellent replica, very well moulded, finished and detailed, and is available in four versions. The three road cars are all right-hand-drive, and come in red, green and blue. The racing version is in silver and is left-hand-drive. All have excellent wire wheels and a wealth of small detail, down to the twin filler caps and rear motif.

Only 125 examples of each version are being made, so make your choice and contact your supplier sooner rather than later. ■



SPECIAL TERRA-TRAC TO MARK 40 YEARS

Last year Horsch, the German agricultural machinery manufacturer, was celebrating it being 40 years since its foundation. To mark this milestone in the company's history Horsch commissioned Universal Hobbies to make this 1/32 scale model of the iconic Terra-Trac (TT) tractor. The three-wheeled TT220 tractor was one of the first machines Horsch made and remained in production until early 2000s.

Only available from Horsch and its dealer network, and priced at around £55, it's a good-looking, largely metal model with good levels of detailing. It's fitted with good-looking flotation tyres, a steerable front-wheel and at the rear a working three-point linkage. Supported on two rams the linkage has an A-frame that incorporates a clevis drawbar with pin. There are silver pto shafts and hydraulic connectors detailed on the rear axle. The hopper does not detach but the rigid hopper plastic cover detaches.

Universal Hobbies has not provided access to the cab interior. However, inside accurately detailed with black patterned matting, black driver's seat, black steering wheel, control lever and detailed silver instrument panel. On the outside the cab's provided with driving mirrors, an orange plastic warning beacon and down the rear pillars two engine breathing pipes. Under the cab there's an accurately detailed engine. ■

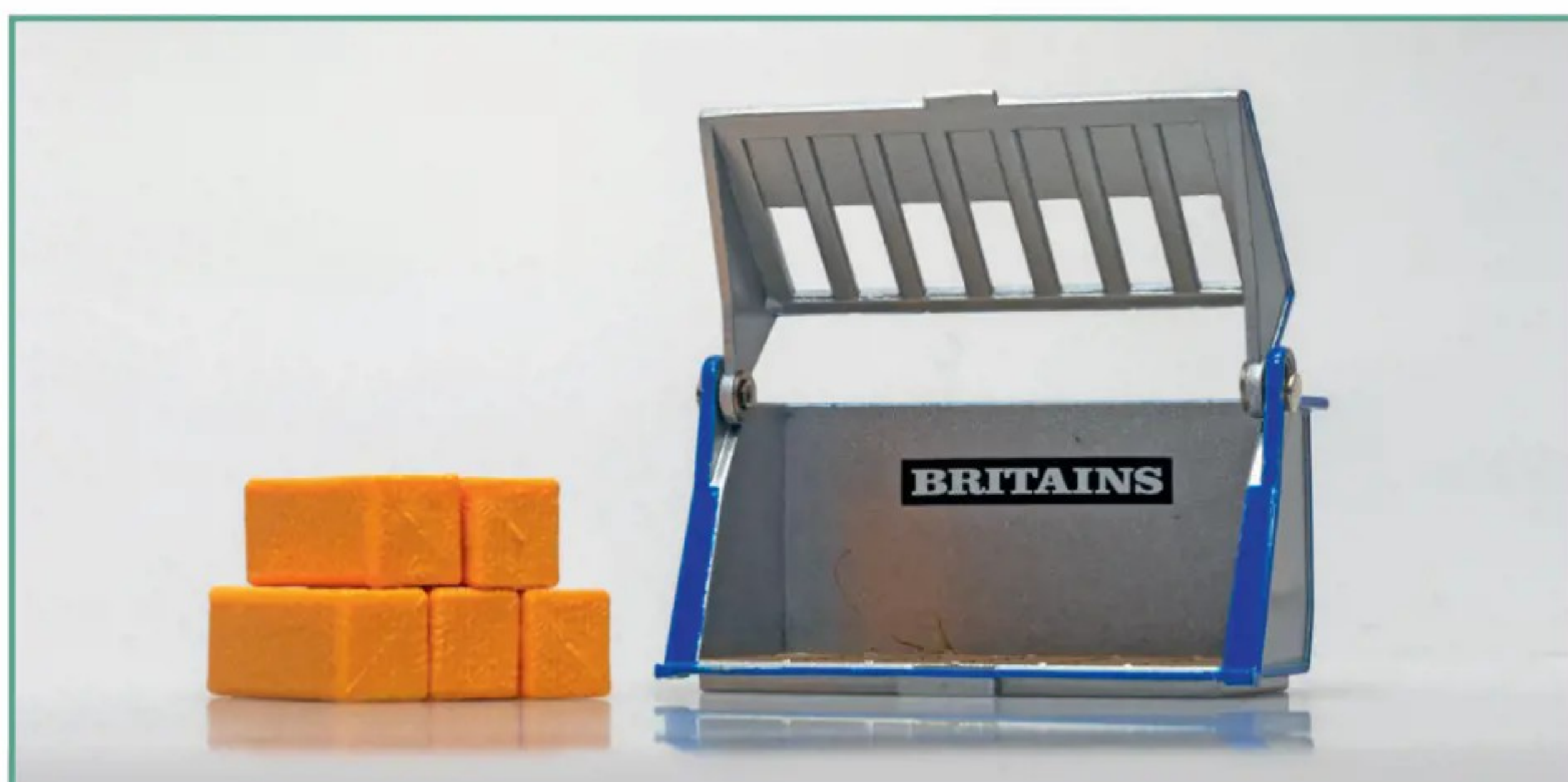
UNIVERSAL HOBBIES Horsch TT220

PRICE: £55.76

SCALE: 1/32

REF: 60147783

www.shop.horsch.com



BRITAINS Britains Link Box

PRICE: £9.99 SCALE: 1/32

REF: 43396

Newly tooled metal link box with two-point hitch and hinged rear door. It's supplied with five small, plastic yellow bales.

www.britainsfarmtoys.co.uk



BRITAINS Case IH Farmall 1206 Tractor

SCALE: 1/32 PRICE: £39.99

REF: 43412

Production limited to 2,500 models for Britains' latest Farmall tractor. The largely metal model has new decals and a three-point, plastic rear linkage.

www.britainsfarmtoys.co.uk



BRITAINS David Brown 1410 4WD Tractor

SCALE: 1/32 PRICE: £27.99

REF: 43393

Britains' updated tractor has traction wheels on front axle, front axle driveshaft detail and its latest strengthen two-point rear linkage.

www.britainsfarmtoys.co.uk



ROS Kuhn Merge-Maxx 440F Belt Merger

SCALE: 1/32 PRICE: £56.06

REF: 9401224

Detailed plastic and metal model designed to fit tractors with three-point front linkages. Two rams set the height of the freely rotating crop guard.

www.kuhn.co.uk/kuhn-shop

AMAZING DIECAST BARGAINS FROM KEITH'S CARS OF DERBY

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BACK IN STOCK!! IXO 1966 MACK R SERIES RUBBER DUCK 'CONVOY' TR100 38.99



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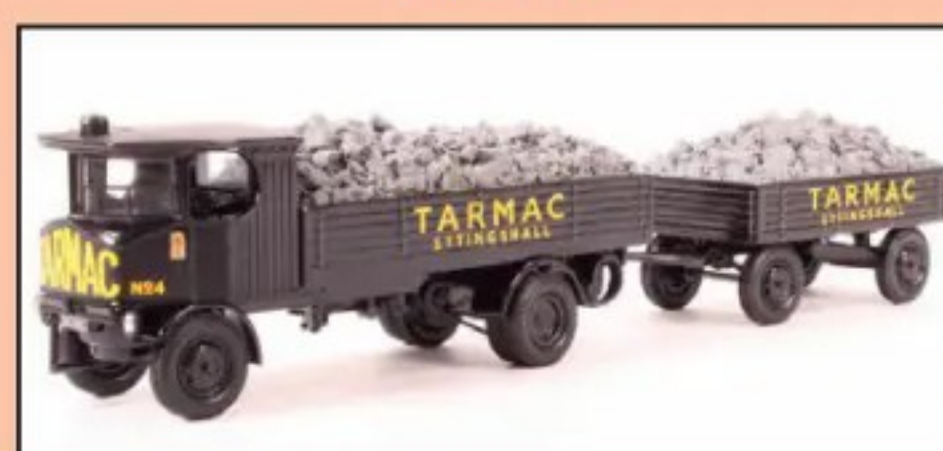
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HOT WHEELS MOVES UP A GEAR WITH ITS LARGER-SCALE MCLAREN F1 GTR

McLaren dominated the 1988 Formula 1 season, winning all but one race (an emotional win for Ferrari at Monza, just a few weeks after Enzo Ferrari's death). Reportedly, whilst waiting to catch the flight home from Italy, McLaren Team Principal, Ron Dennis, and designer Gordon Murray were discussing the team's future moves and the decision to design and build a road car was made before the flight was even called.

Murray was to be the car's Chief Designer, and opted for an interesting seating layout, with the driver seated centrally with space for two passengers, one either side. The handpicked engineering team rethought every element of sports car design. Drawing on McLaren's racing expertise, and with an uncompromising approach to design, the team stripped weight, reduced drag and increased downforce. The 'F1' was born.

Murray eventually agreed to modify the F1 into a racing car. Thanks to the original design's race-bred heritage, extensive modification was not needed to actually turn the F1 into a full-on racing car. This new version was designated the F1 GTR.

Mattel's famous brand needs no introduction, but the recent launch of its Premium range of



ABOVE
The attractive lines of the F1 GTR are very nicely captured here and the finish of the Papaya Orange paintwork is excellent.

**HOT WHEELS
PREMIUM
1995 McLaren
F1 GTR**

SCALE: 1/43
PRICE: £19.00
REF: HWT15

www.hotwheels.com

larger, 1/43 scale models does. During 2024, Hot Wheels moved back into the 1/43 scale market with a budget range focusing on an interesting mix of high-end performance sportscars and 4-wheel-drives. Featuring Porsches, Ford Mustangs old and new, Nissan Skylines and GT-Rs, Mercs old and new, Corvettes and this McLaren, plus Dodge and Toyota 4WDs, the mix is clearly positioned to appeal to the bedroom-poster sector. But these are all also excellent collectables at a great price.

Manufactured with diecast bodies and chassis, the models have a good, weighty feel to them. The McLaren F1 GTR featured here is a very appealing release, at a great price point. Whilst it lacks the finesse of more expensive models, it incorporates a good level of detail, an opening engine cover and the wheels are particularly worthy of mention. Painted very nicely in McLaren's iconic Papaya Orange, it makes for really good value and comes in an attractive, displayable blister pack (which opens without the need to cut it). These are available at many stores where Hot Wheels can be found, such as Smyth's Toys, The Entertainer and Argos, or check out www.hotwheels.com for alternatives. ■

LEFT
The rear end is perfectly replicated too, with some great attention to detail with the lights, grille and badging, plus the engine cover lifts up.



**KAIDO HOUSE MINI GT
Datsun 510 Street Racing V3
Indonesia Exclusive**
SCALE: 1/64 **PRICE:** £79.99 **REF:** KHMG152
www.modelstore.co.uk

Limited release of the Datsun 510 street racer, released exclusively at the 2024 Indonesia Diecast Expo. Diecast body/chassis, alloy wheels and opening bonnet.



**MINI GT
Nissan Fairlady Z Pandem – Seiran
Blue**
SCALE: 1/64 **PRICE:** £13.99 **REF:** MGT00778
www.clevelandsdiecast.co.uk

Pandem version of the Fairlady Z, finished in a beautiful metallic blue with diecast body and chassis, and superb alloy wheels fitted with realistic rubber tyres.

NEW CHEVY IS KING OF THE ROAD!

The Kingswood was Chevrolet's top-line station wagon when it was introduced in 1969. Based on the luxurious Caprice, it shared the new styling for that year, with the addition of simulated wood panelling to signify its topline status. Hidden headlights were an option, as was a power window in the tailgate, which could be either swung open or hinged downwards. Power was from a 327 cubic inch (5360cc) V8 with 350 cubic inch (5736cc) or 427 cubic inch (6998cc) as performance options, putting out 350 and 390 bhp respectively.

The Automodello is magnificent, beautifully moulded and finished as always. The review example is in garnet red, a dark shade, and this contrasts well with the 'wood' trim on the sides and the wealth of plated detail. One notable plated feature is the roof rack, arrow-shaped and with all the bars and bracing replicated. Other fine details include the width markers on the front wings, radio aerial stub, rear tailgate button and the small rear motif. The front grille has the headlights in the hidden position, and the triple rear lights that were another feature of the Kingswood are also very well done. The interior is in black, and again all the detail is there, down to the wood effect trim on the steering wheel and the dials on the fascia. A very fine model for lovers of American cars of this era.

AUTOMODELLO 1969 CHEVROLET KINGSWOOD ESTATE

PRICE: from \$249.95
SCALE: 1/24
REF: 24C06060 - 65

www.automodello.com

Standard edition models are in garnet red as shown, or butternut yellow, a light shade, and production is limited to just 99 of each. 'Encomium' editions are in light metallic blue, silver or black, with a production of just 49 each, and are priced at \$299.95. All are certificated, and come in Automodello's trademark clamshell box. ■



CONRAD
MAN eTGX GX Ultra 4x2 Tractor 'IAA 2024' design
SCALE: 1/50 PRICE: €96.00 REF: n/a

Released in a limited-edition version for the IAA trade show, sporting a very impressive charcoal black finish with red trim and highlights.

www.man-shop.eu



CONRAD
MAN TGX GX 18.520 4x2 Tractor '100 Years of MAN Diesel I' design
SCALE: 1/50 PRICE: €96 REF: C0800-0014

Celebrating 100 years of MAN, this is finished in a light grey base colour with a striking graphic design. Fully modelled cabin interior and exterior details.

www.man-shop.eu



WSI MODELS
MAN eTGS NN 6x2 with Meiller hook lift 'IAA 2024' design
SCALE: 1/50 PRICE: £140 REF: C0812-1799

Fitted with a fully operational Meiller hook lift container handling system and high sided container. Features steering front/rear axles and opening tailgate.

www.man-shop.eu



CONRAD
MAN TGS NN 6x4 truck with Meiller Trigenius D316 3-way tipping body
SCALE: 1/50 PRICE: €80 REF: n/a

The latest TGS NN cabin and fully operational Meiller dump body, featuring the ability to tip on all-three sides are encapsulated in this exclusive release.

www.man-shop.eu



DON'T SLEEP ON GETTING THIS STUNNING PAIR OF NITE COACHES

AutoCult's first releases of 2025 have certainly raised the bar yet again and include this dramatic pair of 1930s American Pickwick Nite Coaches. They look so good that they will no doubt find immediate favour with many collectors, and not just exclusively with bus and coach fans.

Depicting the mid-point of the production history of Pickwick Motor Coach Works Ltd, but also a pivotal point in the evolving development of American automotive passenger networks, they represent pretty significant milestones.

The Pickwick empire had grown as a Southern California based tourist industry, ultimately emanating from the prestigious Pickwick Terminal Hotel, San Diego opened in May 1927. Its growth embraced motor transport very enthusiastically through the Pickwick Corporation to the extent of designing and building its own, unique, coaches. In 1923, it established an in-house manufacturing division to build them in Los Angeles managed by Dwight E. Austin who was destined to become a major player in the American transportation industry. Those Pickwick passenger networks expanded rapidly during the 1930s, reaching out not only across the USA, but internationally thanks to its interlinked road and air travel networks.

Austin's Nite Coach replaced his earlier 1925 'Intercity Parlor Buffet Coach' in 1928 and was succeeded in turn by his similarly double decked 'Duplex Day Coach' in early 1930. Although around 40 'Duplex' coaches were built it is thought

AUTOCULT
Pickwick
NiteCoach - 1930

SCALE: 1/43
PRICE: TBC
REF: 10014-1
black-yellow-red,
10014-2 blue-white

www.autocult-models.de/models/autocult-10014/

ABOVE
The front view impression of the Nite Coach with its elevated driver's position somewhat distorts the perspective of its size which, in reality, was massive.



ABOVE
So much excellent fine detailing from AutoCult as seen here on the rear 'annex' tail end which accommodated the lavatory and galley.

that just four examples (some sources say five...) of the Nite Coach were made.

As always AutoCult's 1/43 sealed resin models of it are loaded with intricate detail and being 250mm long there is plenty of them to see. Visible are the thirteen individual convertible compartments that could each hold two people - making a total potential of twenty-six passengers. The compartments had seats that faced each other and were hinged. One would swing upward, the other downward, making an upper and lower sleeping berth. With the emphasis on luxury travel the Nite Coach was fully fitted out as an overnight bus for the routes to and from Los Angeles south to San Diego and north to San Francisco. In addition to the convertible compartments accommodation included a lavatory, a galley, and a steward. All this was accommodated in a steel framed duralumin bodywork just over thirty four feet long, eight feet wide and ten feet tall making it larger than any other existing bus at the time. The overall charisma of the Nite Bus is captured superbly by AutoCult from every angle and with a character dominated by the distinctive front end with its elevated driver's position sat above the massive radiator of the Sterling Petrel, 779 cu in, 110 hp inline "flathead" six-cylinder petrol engine more usually used in marine applications.

AutoCult's Nite Coach is available in two equally attractive liveries: the Pickwick Stages System version in black, yellow and red, and the Pickwick Greyhound Lines version in blue and white. ■



ABOVE
#10014-1 in the black, yellow and red Pickwick Stages System livery (left) and #10014-2 in the blue and white Pickwick Greyhound Lines livery (right).



CONRAD
Liebherr R938 Tracked Excavator
'Lise & Fils' Decoration
SCALE: 1/50 PRICE: €145 REF: 2215-25

www.conrad-modele-de

The model is packed with detail, from the metal safety railings and cabin interior to the excellent range of movement of the front end equipment.



ROS
Manitou MRT 2260 Telescopic Handler
SCALE: 1/32 PRICE: €136 REF: n/a

www.wsxxx

Comes with a number of accessories including pallet forks, lifting arm and access platform, each clipping into place on the end of the telescopic boom.



IMC MODELS
Develon DL85 Wheel Loader
SCALE: 1/32 PRICE: €85
REF: 16-1017

eu.develonshop.com

IMC Models has now released the Develon brand version of this popular articulated wheel loader, nicely capturing the features of the full-sized machine.



IMC MODELS
Develon DL80TL Telescopic Wheel Loader
SCALE: 1/32 PRICE: €85 REF: 16-1019

eu.develonshop.com

Offers a telescopic boom for added reach and a silage/manure handling bucket with grapple, ideal for work on the farm. There is a cabin interior and articulating chassis.



IMC MODELS
Sany Container Reach Stacker
SCALE: 1/50 PRICE: €119
REF: 20-1086

<https://autxxx>

Coming soon in the Sarens corporate blue colours. Packed with detail, from the cabin interior to the safety railings with a telescopic boom.



HEAVY HAUL REPLICAS
Mack Titan '2017 DeBerardinis' Tri-Axle Tractor
PRICE: \$299 SCALE: 1/50 REF: HHR135A-1

www.heavyhaulreplicas.com

The Tri-Axle Titan which will come in a number of liveries. This one includes a detachable ballast tray, liftable axle, steering front axle and an accessory pack.



HEAVY HAUL REPLICAS
Mack Titan '2018 Sid Kamp Trucking' Tri-Axle Tractor
SCALE: 1/18 PRICE: \$279 REF: HHR135B-1

www.heavyhaulreplicas.com

Featuring a fully operational fifth-wheel coupling plate, detailed cabin interior with opening cabin doors and a tilting bonnet revealing the immaculate engine bay.



HEAVY HAUL REPLICAS
Mack Titan '2014 Nuss Truck & Equipment' Tri-axle Tractor
SCALE: 1/50 PRICE: £39.99 REF: HHR135I-1

www.heavyhaulreplicas.com

Incorporates working suspension and steering, opening cabin and bonnet revealing the fully replicated interiors and a hitch accessory pack.

The fashion conscious Beetle

Stephen Paul Hardy looks back to the mid-seventies and gets nostalgic about pulling blue jeans on and going Beetle driving thanks to an unexpected recent release from Solido...



ABOVE
Black trim over distinctive, bright, paintwork colours was an implicit part of many of Volkswagen AGs sales campaign "Special Edition Beetles". Enhancing the package further with denim upholstery was a ploy aimed particularly at catching the attention youthful buyers!

FURTHER READING

<https://www.jeansbeetles.com/chronologieenglish.htm>

<https://sebeetles.com/?s=Jeans>

<https://www.br.de/nachrichten/deutschland-welt/br24zeitreise-internationale-automobil Ausstellung-1973,Shx4PwW>

The modern start to the story happened at the end of mid November last year when an eagle eyed member of the French VW Coccinelle JEANS Facebook Group, Alexandre Achard, spotted a new 1/18 diecast release on Solido's stand at Le salon Epoqu'Auto, Lyon. When posted on Facebook his photo of the exhibited model sent ripples of intrigue, consternation and clamour through the French Jeans Beetle fraternity and prompted an unraveling of a story that lasted into the New Year 2025.

As for the historic start to the story let's keep the plot simple and non-technical (*and non-geeky I hope Stephen! - Ed*) with the start of the original Jeans Beetle story back in the halcyon days of the mid-seventies...

THE "ORIGINAL JEANS" BEETLE

Well, actually, there ended up a lot of them over time but the very first Beetles being seen wearing not just blue but also green and black denims, were a distinctly seventies thing.

The whole saga kicked off with Volkswagen showing a trio of Special Beetles at the IAA (Frankfurt International Motor Show) in September 1973 one of which was the 'stand out from the crowd' Jeans. Now although the story that evolved from that point on is very colourful I'm not going to get sidetracked by it but just leave fully informative links as further reading as footnotes for readers who want to know more.

More important - and relevant - is that, surprisingly, the Jeans Beetles including that original version have been largely overlooked (or ignored?) by scale model manufacturers over the past 50 years.

DENIM IN DIECASTS (WITH STITCHING)

Quick research reveals that of the scale model Jeans Beetles that have been released to date the most accurate are Ottomobile's sealed resin Phoenix Red Jeans Beetle and Minichamps diecast Alpine White Jeans Bug offerings. Both in 1/18. Moving down to 1/43 Schuco included a couple of versions in its catalogue some while back and one appeared in the Eagle Race/Universal Hobbies series. This latter version in deep yellow with red stitching (yes really) was described as a Jeans Prototype, whereas in reality, it was modelled from a Beetle adorned with a Volkswagen "Jeans Kit".

Yes so successful was the Jeans Beetle marketing in 1974 that Volkswagen offered a kit in its dealer available accessory range that enabled any Beetle owner to pull a set of jeans on their car and adorn it with Jeans themed accessory parts including a fairly extensive set of decals representing black stitching along the body line seams!

Lastly (I think) but still with 1/43 was the blister packed Mebetoys-Mattel 1303 Jeans in no less than four colours - yellow, orange, green and blue which curiously seem to command quite high values in mint condition.

PURISTS TURN THE PAGE...

Now if you know, you know and if you don't then in the context of this article it doesn't matter but 1303 was never a jeans style (*Stephen stop right there - Ed*). Interestingly then that Solido's Jeans (S1800522-yellow) has appeared and brought with it some significant hit points. The twist though is in its availability - or at least its availability so far.



MAIN IMAGE
Immediately recognisable as a Jeans Beetle thanks to its distinctive Tunisgelb paint colour with black trim this very recent release from Solido does however come with a couple of twists in the tale behind its release.



ABOVE
A model of a Jeans Beetle needs, by definition, to be flaunting its upholstery. Knowing this Solido deliver a convincing representation that invites the display of the model with at least one door open...

BELOW
Solido have now marketed quite a number of variations based on its 1/18 diecast 1303 model - many of them of Special Edition Beetle variations. Few though have been quite so challenging for collectors to acquire as this one representing the original Jeans Beetle launched five decades ago at IAA Frankfurt in September 1973!

I am certain most if not all readers are very aware that many scale model manufacturers make specific, limited quantity, colour or livery variations of some of their products for specialist retailer (reseller) outlets or specific single nation markets. Solido for example have in the past produced such variations specifically for the German market (*Wolfsburg Winners*, October 2020 issue). Similarly since 2021 it has been producing versions of its current castings in colour and livery variations specifically for sale in what it describes as 'Mass Market' outlets. Its latest offerings in this market sector were one of the features of its extensive unveilings at Spielwarenmesse last month.

What I cannot remember ever having previously happened though is a livery variation of such significance, albeit representational, being offered as a Mass Market exclusive rather than through a specialist retailer catering for niche or enthusiast tastes. In this case the Mass Market is outwardly the extensive French Leclerc hypermarket chain. And here lies the second twist in that as such the Solido 1303 Jeans is not that easily accessible to VW model collectors outside of France.

SIGNIFICANT JEANS?

Well yes it is, if you accept that it is in reality a representational model specifically targeted at a large sales volume sector of the market, where the majority of purchases will be attracted by a visual impact rather than complete authenticity.

Setting aside the purist's concerns then, by viewing it as representational this is the first scale model in five decades that captures the black trimmed,

ochre-yellow paintwork of that original Jeans Beetle. Volkswagen's name for the paint colour was Tunisgelb (Tunis yellow) - a shade only ever used on Jeans Beetles. Importantly it comes sat on Solido's well utilised representation of the VW Lemmerz steel sports wheels and another credit point is the effort put into delivering a convincing representation of the denim upholstered interior. The cherry on the icing, as far as I am concerned, is the rear licence plate. It replicates the display plate Volkswagen used back in September 1973 for the IAA launch and is readily seen at 45 seconds into a short video readily accessible online from the Bayerischer Rundfunk ("Bavarian Broadcasting") / BR24 archives. A link to which surfaced on a dedicated Jeans Beetle Facebook Group back in December 2023. This prompted screen shots from this significant archive record to be included in the authoritative SEBeetles website where, just maybe, Solido picked up the information that inputted into this nice little bit of detailing.

So all in all a significant release for two reasons. Firstly because it is the only representation of the original Tunisgelb Jeans Beetle produced to date and because it is confoundingly a specialist niche interest livery only available (currently) from French Hypermarkets. ■





The dream racing car

Porsche was on the front row of the new Group 5 regulations, for the 1976 FIA World Championship. The 935 Turbo was their weapon but the works team did not stay long. **Francisco Mota** looks at privateer teams that gave the manufacturer most of the 935's best results. Photos: João Carlos Oliveira

Group 5 'Special Production Car' regulations started in 1976 as a way to increase the number of entries in the FIA World Championship of Makes. Cars had to use the same basic structure of a GT or Touring road car, and the same engine block. From there, they could change almost everything to make it go faster. The concept behind this set of regulations was that several manufacturers could enter their heavily modified road cars. There was no need for the original car to be an especially fast or competitive machine, because the allowed modifications would take care of that. However, and contrary to expectations, that was not the case.

In fact, only two manufacturers picked up the rule book and started to work in 1974, two years before the Group 5 arrived. BMW was one of those, using their magnificent 3.0 CSL Coupé as the base car, first with a non-turbo engine and later equipped with a larger cubic capacity in-line six-cylinder engine fitted with a turbocharger. They won three races out of seven in 1976, but left the championship the following

year, leaving Porsche and the 935 Turbo alone. The manufacturer from Stuttgart was not particularly happy with this situation, as they were now racing against themselves. The solution was to give privateer teams the chance to buy and race a 935 Turbo. Back at the factory a small production line was installed to build a privateer version of the 935 Turbo for the 1977 season, based on the 1976 works car. Meanwhile, Porsche engineering kept on developing the 935 and came up with a new version for 1977, the 935/77, exclusively for the works team. More power and revised aerodynamics gave them an advantage over privateers, something that they did not appreciate, considering they were buying what was supposedly the same car from Porsche.

Not wanting to ruin the business of selling racing cars to privateer teams, Porsche decides to withdraw from the championship at the end of 1977. The works team would be back in 1978, but for only two races, showing off their new 935/78, also known as the Moby Dick, the extreme evolution of the original concept.

From 1978 onwards, the Porsche 935 Turbo dominated the championship. However, that did not

MAIN IMAGE

From left, some of the most colourful 935 cars used by privateer teams: Meccarillos #46, Momo #30 and Vegla #49.



mean there was no competition between privateer teams that now had an evolution version, based on the previous year's machine. The 1978 World Championship for Makes ended with eight Porsche wins, by four different teams, Brumos, Loos, Kremer. Martini Racing won in Silverstone when they took the 935/78 Moby Dick to its sole victory in the championship. By this time, there were several privateer teams racing the 935 Turbo. It was a relatively easy car to operate by a small team, due to its robustness and reliability. The performance available was fine and the engine, transmission and suspension were easy to work on. And, of course, Porsche customer service was more than willing to sell you much needed spare parts. Quite the dream racing car, at a time when computers were still far away from garages or race tracks and everything was so much simpler than today.

SCALE MODELS

As always, a lot of investigation was made by model manufacturer Spark on the subject of Porsche 935, not only the cars that raced at Le Mans, but also many other examples used in several race series around the globe. The result is a series of 1/43 scale models produced in the last decade or so. A number of those, selected mainly for their looks, have made it into this two part feature (part two net month!). The diversity of colourful liveries bring these pages alive, but there are also many small details that differ from one model to the next. All reproduced with the precision that made the reputation of this model maker. The basic set of parts is more or less the same, however there are many different elements specific to several models.

The first model we have is the 1976 Martini Racing 935 that raced at Le Mans and finished in 4th place overall, quite an achievement for a new car. Such was the rate of evolution that, by June, Porsche had already



ABOVE Before selling the 935 to privateer teams, Porsche entered the first examples in their works team. Here's the famous Martini Racing #40 as raced in Le Mans 1976.



ABOVE Beneath this aerodynamic shape, there was a street version of the 911. Group 5 regulations allowed that and more.

RIGHT Martini colours suit the 935 curve-heavy body perfectly. The rear wing was stretched as far back as legally possible.



changed the front from the classic 911 shape to a new 'flatnose' and made the tail longer so the car could reach 216.875mph in the long Le Mans straight. The model also features the double headlamp cluster and a roof aerial. Rear wheel rims are much wider and are painted gold and chrome. The rear view looks dramatic, with the original shape of the 911 encapsulated inside the extended wheel arches. If you only have room for a single 935 Turbo in your collection, this is it. The 935/76 was the bait to raise interest among privateer teams. Porsche only started delivering cars the following year.

We start the privateer run with a car entered by Jean Marc Smajda, with race number 40 and prepared by the Cachia workshop. Painted black as a base colour, it had an X-ray art painting of part of the internals depicted in red. The model features a pair of extra spotlights on the bonnet. It finished third overall in the 1977 Le Mans 24 hours.

Next to it, with race number 94 is the Whittington Brothers Racing entry in the 1978 Le Mans 24 hours



ABOVE From left: the X-ray car that finished Le Mans 1977 in third place, the Whittington Brothers entry in the 1978 Le Mans edition and the Mondelo car, that finished 7th in the same event.



ABOVE From left: The Le Mans 1978 Hawaiian Tropic 935 that finished 5th, the Dijon 6 hours race winner in the same year and the Portland 100 miles race Momo sponsored 935, also from 1978.

that they did not finish. The model has both headlamps covered with white tape, as it was usual for the first part of the race. It also features a metallic grille on the front air entrance, a roof aerial and those black air extractors on each wheel. Exhaust pipes are double and positioned in the middle, contrary to the black car that uses only one to the left as well as the white, red and yellow Mondelo sponsored 935. This one had race number 41 in the same event, also prepared by Cachia. Rear view mirrors have extensions that place them further away from the body to give better visibility to the rear. In the front, just above the pair of ovoid air scoops, there are a pair of rectangular yellow spotlights. The car was driven by a Brazilian team of drivers and finished an honorable 7th place overall.

For the next trio of 935s we stay in the 1978 season and start at Le Mans. This car with race number 90, one of the first sponsored by Hawaiian Tropic, a suncare product made famous by its pre-grid girls dressed in bikinis. The model features a very simple but effective colour scheme, red with yellow wheels and some specific details. The front air entrance has a curved mesh protection that would be seen in other 935s. To enhance visibility to the right side mirror, it was placed on the right front wheel arch; there is red tape around headlamp covers, presumably to hold in place a protective plastic. Wheel extractors are placed further outwards to increase brake cooling. There's a white safety net on the driver's door window and a double exhaust with different diameter. Dick Barbour Racing entered the car and finished 5th overall, winning his class.

The second car in this trio is the winner of the Dijon 6 hours race, in France. The car was entered by Kremer Racing and was sponsored by Adolphe Lafont, a brand



of work clothing. It is a standard car in appearance, featuring crossed spoke golden painted wheel rims. There are small differences like the shape of the side mirrors and placement of exhaust pipes.

The Momo sponsored 935 was driven by the owner of this Italian car accessories company, Gianpiero Moretti in the 1978 Portland 100 Miles race. He finished in second place, proving he was also a gifted driver. The race was a leg of the USA IMSA GT challenge. The model has a few specific parts, like a pair of black aerodynamic fins on the bonnet, plus the left

LEFT Brazilian drivers brought with them the country's sponsor, making for a magnificent livery, as seen at Le Mans 1977.

BELOW LEFT There are different exhaust configurations that can be seen in the various 935s. This was one of the options.



ABOVE Extra spotlights for the dark hours at Le Mans are perfectly reproduced in this model.



ABOVE Moretti, the owner of Momo, was also a fast racing driver who had no problems in finding sponsorship.



ABOVE The 1979 season saw cars like these three racing for the championship. From left: the Gelo sponsored car as raced at Le Mans and which did not finish, the Sekurit that finished seventh overall, with new sills and the Budweiser blue car that won the Sebring 12 hours race.



ABOVE In this trio we have cars from 1979 and 1980. From left: the Meccarillos that raced the 1980 Le Mans race but did not finish, the Vegla car that was entered in the previous year, and another Budweiser 935, this time painted yellow as it won the Watkins Glenn 6 hours race.



ABOVE
A bird's eye view of this trio is perfect for catching all the small difference between them, and all reproduced with great care.



ABOVE
Privateer teams sometimes modified the car bought from Porsche, like this grille over the engine compartment.

side mirror mounted on the wheel arch and a safety net on the driver's door window. On the other side, there's a black tube that takes air to the cockpit through the window. Side air entrances ahead of the rear wheels seem a little smaller than standard and the rear bumper is deeper and includes the exhausts.

The following trio takes us to the 1979 season, starting with the Gelo Sportswear sponsored car number 36 that raced in Le Mans, but did not make it to the finish line. The model features both headlamps covered with black tape and there are a pair of air scoops just behind those on the bonnet, presumably to let hot air out. The biggest difference are the two side skirts placed over each sill, surely to enhance aerodynamics under the car.

The Sekurit sponsored car also raced at Le Mans the same year and finished seventh overall. It features new sills and new air scoops between the headlamps and front grille. The Budweiser sponsored blue car with race

number 9 has the rounded mesh to protect the main air entrance and silver tape around both headlamp clusters. There's also a safety net in the drivers's side and a roof antenna. This car raced in the 1979 12 hours Sebring race, entered by Dick Barbour Racing Team and won the event outright.

For the very colorful last trio we selected cars from 1979 and 1980. The yellow, Budweiser sponsored 935 is another Whittington Brothers entry, this time at the Watkins Glenn 6 hours race, that they won. Apart from the taped headlights, the car features the three fuel, oil and water fillers in the front bonnet without the usual covers.

Next to it we have the blue Vegla Sekurit sponsored car with race number 49, entered in the 1980 Le Mans race. It finished eighth and won Group 5. It has some specific details like the shape of the front mesh grille, taller side sills and two extra air scoops on the rear bonnet to take air into the engine compartment. It also features an extra red lamp on the rear bumper.

Probably the most festive livery is the one sponsored by Meccarillos, with red as base colour with several areas covered with a pattern of red and yellow rhombuses. The car itself has the taller sill design, crossed spoke wheels without heat extractors, a small roof aerial and a black tube on the right side window to take fresh air inside the cockpit. It was entered in the 1980 Le Mans but did not reach the end of the race.

Attention to detail is, as always, the secret to make a series of different versions of the same car look interesting. Add to this a car like the Porsche 935 Turbo and you have another collection theme ahead of you. Next time, we'll look at what happened after the 1979 season and how the 935 evolved in the hands of privateer teams. ■

A new Škoda 130 fresh from Fox18

Alex Winson finds out if this new range of Czech 1/64 scale models will stand up in an already saturated miniature market...

MAIN IMAGE

Perhaps my favourite of the set is the plain body version finished in Coral Red.

There are moments in this hobby when something comes totally, and unexpectedly, out of left field. A case in point is Czech company Fox18's first attempt in the 1/64 market with their new Fox64 line. Fox18 have been offering their services creating unique diecast in large scale for some time, but the release of two sets of Škoda 130s recently was a rather bold move.

Since the disappearance of the High Speed/Grell line of diecast models in the 2000s, scarcely any vintage cars from the Eastern side of the Berlin Wall have appeared in scales smaller than 1/43. Welly have a few castings (including Škodas) and both they and Majorette have added the Dacia 1300 to their lines in recent years. But it remains a rather niche area, and especially one that could cause difficulties for a smaller brand tackling a

scale entirely new to them.

The 1/64 market is also exponentially growing. The Mattel brands' all-consuming progress, the almost monthly appearance of new Chinese models and the low volume, resin and 3D print manufacturers hovering in the background all provide competition, and means that anyone looking to enter such a saturated market needs to make a flying start.

So, have Fox managed to create something that can stay afloat? When a parcel arrived from the Czech Republic recently, I was keen to see how they had fared.

They have debuted two new castings in sets of four vehicles, each with different competition war paint or in plain road car guise. The Škoda 110 based 130 RS coupe is the focus of one set, but it's the set made up of the rather wonderful 130 LR model that will be the focus of my attention.



Škoda's Type 742 (later 746) series of compact cars was introduced in 1976. Initially only available with two engine sizes (1046cc for the "105" model and 1174 for the "120"), the range was given a facelift in 1983, modernising the looks with new headlights and bumpers. In 1984 a new 1289cc engine was added to the range creating the 130 model, and this formed the basis of Škoda's entry into Group B rallying with the 130 LR model.

Škoda had previously been a successful force in rallying with their 130 RS model, but the Group 2 category, in which it had been competing, was now defunct. So the engineers from Mladá Boleslav took the humdrum 130 and created a car that could compete at the dizzying new heights that rallying had reached. That's not to say however that the 130 would be battling directly with the mega power creations of Lancia, Peugeot, Audi et al; Group B had subclasses that were all highly competitive. B/12 was the home of the fire spitting monsters that have come to be synonymous with the era, but Group B/9 was the category that the 130 LR competed in, against cars like the Talbot Samba and Citroën Visa.

Homologated in 1984, the first outing for the LR was the 1985 Valašská Zima Rally, where factory cars took a clean sweep of the podium. Later that year, John Haugland and co-driver Jan Olaf Bohlin took 15th in the British Lombard RAC Rally, a highly respectable result. 1986 saw 130s taking a class victory in the Acropolis Rally and 6th place in the San Remo rally, beating B/12 Opel Mantas in the process.

Perhaps the most famous result for the 130 LR however was the 1986 Marlboro Günaydin Turkish Rally. A non-WRC event, the entry list was regardless

//

So, have Fox managed to create something that can stay afloat? When a parcel arrived from the Czech Republic recently, I was keen to see how they had fared.

//

still full of B/12 cars crewed by some well-known names. The two works 130 LRs entered looked rather hopelessly outclassed. Then the rain came. Adding to tough terrain and humidity, the downpour took out less reliable cars instantly and also saw the B/12 cars struggling to put their power down. Despite the cooling fan failing, the 130 LR piloted by Gerhard Kalnay and Günter Tazreiter won the event outright, an incredible achievement that cemented the car's reputation in rallying lore, and made it one of Škoda's proudest moments.

There are a few brands that have replicated the 130 LR in scale, but certainly none that have done it in true 1/64. Matchbox's 1987 version was in a "made to fit the box" 1/57 scale, and isn't a particularly good casting in my opinion. So what are the Fox models like then? In my humble opinion they're very good indeed. In fact, for their first attempt in the scale Fox have done an incredible job. I suspect there is involvement from the IXO factory, but in no way is that a negative observation.

The sets are beautifully presented in Perspex display cases with neatly decorated bases. There are two factory rally liveries; the No.21 car of Pavel Sibera and Petr Gross that finished 3rd in the 1988 Rally Bohemia, and the No.24 1986 RAC rally contender of John Haugland and Monika Eckardt. And there are also two 'plain body' versions; a white example and one finished in Škoda "Koralova Cerven" or Coral Red.

They're perfectly proportioned, dainty little things and very well detailed. The accurately replicated wheels are wrapped with treaded rubber and roll with relative ease; the detail and quality are what one would expect from one of the mainstream 1/64 manufacturers.





LEFT
Of the many cars in my scale collection, the two Rozkvet cars remain high on my list of favourites.



ABOVE
The 130 LR was created from the pedestrian 130 L family car. Image: Flickr/Google



ABOVE
A very lively shot of the Sibera Gross car during the 1988 Rally Bohemia. Image: from IXO

FAR LEFT
A busy livery likes this needs a good finish, and Fox have done a great job.

LEFT
As well as the Coral Red example, the other plain body car in the Fox set is this white example.



At this scale any poor fitment or quality control slips will stand out like a sore thumb, but aside from some slightly poorly seated tyres, which required a poke with a fingertip, there's not much to complain about. The pad applied liveries are sharp and accurately placed and through the windows a detailed interior complete with roll cage is visible. There's miniature Hella light pods, separate parts for the bumpers, spoiler, grille and exhaust which all fit well with no alignment issues.

And as readers will notice thanks to the accompanying images, composing this article also gave me a neat excuse to bring out a couple of rare gems in my collection; two Škodas made by the then Czechoslovakian toy maker Rozkvet. These were produced in the 1980s, before the "Velvet Divorce" that split Czechoslovakia into the two states it is now. Rozkvet's headquarters were in Banská Bystrica, in what is now Slovakia, and under the "Mini Model" line they produced the Škoda Favorit and Škoda 120 in a number of colour schemes including police cars, taxis and rally liveried versions. I picked my 120 up in Prague and the Favorit through a Czech auction site and they are some of the favourite models in my possession.

Consumer goods and cars from "over the wall" were often derided for their poor quality and indeed Škoda themselves were often the butt of a joke in the motoring press or down the pub. But the Rozkvet cars are well built even for today's standards; metal bases, decent interiors, simply detailed yet effective. And the

paint is thicker than you'd get on any Mattel mainline these days. They're also true 1/64 according to my rather rough measurements. I'm a fan of vintage diecast just as much as I am modern, and the Rozkvet cars make a great way to tie old and new together.

Back to the present and it's clear to me that Fox have made a product they deserve to be proud of. But there's one issue I can't ignore. The 4 car sets aren't cheap. I paid around £80 including postage from a seller in the Czech Republic and the cars aren't sold individually. The casual collector will no doubt find this hard to swallow, but there are rally fanatics and a growing number of fans of Eastern Bloc vehicles who will find a lot to love with these models. I hope this isn't the last we see of Fox in 1/64. I for one am keeping everything crossed for more. ■



ABOVE
The underside of the Rozkvet cars reveals the model name replicates the Škoda badging as it would on the real thing.

BELOW
Available only in a set of four, the Fox cars are well presented in Perspex display cases.





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Fiat EV models

As electric cars becoming increasingly popular, **Kevin Brock** looks at where it all started and the scale replicas in production today.

ABOVE
Fiat 500 EVs from Majorette, Matchbox and Tomy.

First of all I must point out that although I love all things diecast and Fiat, I'm certainly no fan of EVs at all. However as I mentioned in my letter in *Diecast Collector* in response to Stephen Paul Hardy's *Signing Off* article on collecting EV models (*Diecast Collector*, August 2023), I've realised that I seem to have unintentionally accumulated a small collection of Fiat EVs without realising it and I just thought I'd share them with you.

Mention electric cars and most people will immediately think of Tesla or the Toyota Prius, certainly not Fiat yet few realise that the very first mass produced electric car from a major motor manufacturer was in fact a Fiat Panda way back in 1990.

Built by Austrian partners Steyr-Puch who also put the Panda 4x4 together it had a 9.2 kW DC electric motor and used twelve 6V lead-acid batteries which

filled the rear seat space making it into a two seater. Top speed was 70km/h with a range of 100km, it was briefly popular in Italian cities and with Italy's various police forces and local government departments but it wasn't promoted very much and not at all in the UK. It certainly didn't get the motoring world charged up, or the model world for that matter, so there is unfortunately no diecast representation of it. Outwardly the only features that identify it as an Elettra are the blanked off front panel where the charging socket plugs in and a set of blue and green graphics down it's flanks with ELETTRA on the rear panel below the side windows and on the hatch. A Code 3 on a spare 1/24 Bburago Panda is achievable with a bit of work.

In 1992 Fiat launched the updated Panda Elettra 2 together with an Elettra version of the brand new Cinquecento city car, which had come out the previous year. It had basically the same 9.2kW DC motor as the first Panda EV with the same top speed and range, transferring its power to the road via its standard gearbox, unusual for an EV. However only about a hundred Cinquecento Elettras were built at Fiat's Polish factory in Tychy, to special order, with production ending in 1996.

Norev certainly made more than a hundred of their excellent 1/43 models of the Elettra, which was part of the Fiat Story partwork available in Italy. Based on the blue Cinquecento casting which was issued in the same series, the Elettra version was in white with nice crisp purple and pink Elettra graphics down the sides and a very small but readable Elettra badge on the hatch. The model however did keep its rear seats, unlike the real car which was also reduced to a two seater like the Panda.

As with the standard car the Cinquecento Elettra was eventually replaced by the Seicento Elettra which had similar performance from its 30kW three-phase asynchronous electric motor. Built from 1996 to 2005 it proved slightly more popular than its predecessors, again being adopted by Italy's police forces, with the

BELOW
Fiat Cinquecento Elettra press picture from 1992.



Cinquecento Elettra

Marzo 1992 **FIAT**

Carabinieri in particular having a small fleet of them.

The 1/43 De Agostini model of the Seicento Elettra is in their distinctive dark blue war paint, as it's No.50 in the Carabinieri Collection partwork which was out a few years back in Italy. In its Carabinieri livery you don't notice its Elettra identity at all, but look closely and you'll find a very small but readable Elettra badge on the hatch below the Seicento badge. The only inaccuracy with this model is that, like the Norev Cinquecento, it keeps its rear seats, the actual car having no space due to battery storage. I wonder how the Carabinieri officers transported their prisoners back to the police station!

After the Seicento was discontinued Fiat sort of lost their way with electric vehicles. However when they launched the new 500 in 2007 it wasn't long before Italian coachbuilders started to use it for their own EV conversions. One such company was Carrozzeria Castagna Milano. It built up to 25 cars, which were all modern interpretations of the classic 1960s Fiat 500 Jolly, and in 2008 they revealed the 'Tender Two' to the world. In true Jolly style the doors have been removed and there is extensive use of Teak wood with a striped canvas roof to top it off. Instead of the usual Fiat motor Castagna chose to install a 34kWh lithium-ion battery which gave the car a top speed of around 80mph with a range of approximately 86 miles.

The Premium X 1/43 resin model of the Castagna 'Tender Two' (ref. PR0255) is spot on. The resin body in powder blue with royal blue wheel arches contrasts well with the 'wood' which trims the cut down bodywork and the blue and white Jolly style deckchair fabric roof complete with creases really does look like fabric. The detail is faultless, with a beautifully clear red Fiat badge on the front and chrome door mirrors, exhausts and bumpers. The interior is similarly impressive and detailed and this model would look good in any Fiat, Jolly/beach car or of course, EV line-up.

The other Castagna 500 EV from Premium X is slightly more controversial being a replica of the 'Kadhafi' car that they built for leader and car enthusiast Col. Gaddafi in 2009. Reported to have cost £175,000, it



ABOVE Matchbox 'Moving Parts' Fiat 500e with Citroen Ami EV.



ABOVE 1/43 Premium X 2008 Fiat 500 Castagna Tender Two EV.



ABOVE 1/43 Premium X 2008 Fiat 500 Castagna Tender Two EV.

Reported to have cost £175,000, it had bright green bodywork with gold wheel arches, apparently a favourite colour scheme...

had bright green bodywork with gold wheel arches, apparently a favourite colour scheme and featured a logo designed by him in place of the Fiat badges front and back. Other bizarre features include a back lit photo of him and a compass set into the wood trim. Looking more beach buggy than Jolly it has a metal roof with roll-back fabric like the standard cabriolet but no doors and a 34kWh lithium-ion battery which gave the car a 99mph top speed and 162 miles of range. I doubt whether that was actually tested though as in 2011 anti-Gaddafi rebels in Tripoli seized the car discovered in an underground garage below his headquarters amongst many other exotics such as Ferraris and Lamborghinis. Press pictures at the time showed the car being pushed away by soldiers and its current location is unknown, I'm sure it made an

Hot Wheels 2013 Fiat 500e.





LEFT
Majorette 1/55 scale Fiat 500e ICON Cabriolet.



Fiats next foray into the world of EVs was really just a token effort and confined to the US states of California and Oregon (due to the recently introduced mandates for zero emission vehicles unique to these two states)



Premium X Fiat 500 Castagna EV pair.



interesting alternative to their usual army Jeep though I'd like to know where they found a charger!

No such problems with the excellent resin model (PR0256) from Premium X however. Comparing it with pictures online show that they've reproduced the rich metallic green and gold colour scheme exactly, and it features as much fine detail as the 'Tender Two'. They show a similar interior and all the unique features the car had including the unique badges and even the photo and compass set in the wood. A controversial choice of subject perhaps but a very interesting car and an excellent model and the two make an attractive pair in an EV line-up.

Fiats next foray into the world of EVs was really just a token effort and confined to the US states of California and Oregon (due to the recently introduced mandates for zero emission vehicles unique to these two states). Fiat already sold the normal 500 in America and launched the Mexican-built battery electric version at the 2012 Los Angeles Auto Show in a bid to pacify the law makers, whilst still keeping 500 sales buoyant. Using a Bosch permanent-magnet induction motor with a 24kWh lithium-ion battery, it had a 100 mile range and retailed at \$32,000, though Fiat claimed to have lost \$14,000 on every 500e sold and they eventually canned the model in 2019 along with the rest of the 500 range in America.

Fiat never released official sales figures for their US electric 500 but you can be sure that they didn't sell as many as Hot Wheels have of their version! Using their existing 500 casting they altered the front and rear bumpers to replicate the EV, added funky new wheels, and released it in their new 2020 ID range looking great

in metallic orange with pizza delivery graphics. Detail is very good for its size, with the very small 500e badge just in front of the rear wheel arch a particularly nice touch, though the extra indicator lights on the front bumper are a mystery. The 500e is now in their standard range with different wheels in blue with black front grille and interior, and bright red with a white grille which was actually a colour option on the real car. For some reason all the tampon printing on the rear has now been omitted and it looks rather unfinished. The colour scheme of grey with racing numbers just doesn't suit it.

After their US EV adventure Fiat decided to concentrate on developing an electric 500 for Europe, eventually launching the all new 500e on 4th March 2020 in Milan. Built at Fiat's famous Mirafiori factory it uses a GKN Automotive G400 permanent-magnet synchronous motor, with either a 24kWh or 42kWh battery, giving ranges of either 185 or 320km/h depending on the choice of battery. Initially launched in the cabriolet body style, the hatchback followed in June of the same year with trim levels called Action, Passion and Icon. It received rave reviews from the motoring press and the model world also seemed to like it with diecasts from Tomy, Majorette, Matchbox and Bburago all following in quick succession after it was launched.

The first one that I noticed was from Japanese firm Takara Tomy (Tomica) in 2021. Number 16 in their 1/59 scale range it's a very well proportioned casting with sharp detail which looks great in Rose Gold, an actual Fiat colour for the 500e, but the dark blue which it also appears in isn't, though it does show off the unique headlight 'eyebrows' and chrome 500 badge





detail on the front nice and clearly.

Majorette were next with their 1/55 500e, badged as a 500 Icon. Slightly bigger and with rather undersized wheels in my opinion the bonus here is that they also make the cabriolet version in bright red, as well as one in a very attractive light blue Pizza delivery livery. What is it with electric 500s that pizza parlours like? They certainly make a good threesome with the cabrio version showing off the realistic interior with its stylish dashboard and flat bottomed steering wheel. Majorette's is also the only one of the three which has separate glazed headlights as opposed to tampo printed ones and chrome trim down the sides and around the side windows.

Last of the little 'uns is the 2021 500e from Matchbox's new 'Moving Parts' 70 Years anniversary range. Its proportions are identical to the Tomy so I'm assuming it must also be 1/59 scale. Painted in a very smart green this is a great casting and is my favourite of the three small ones. It has a superb front end, the headlights and 'eyebrow' features picked out in white rather than silver with the beautifully clear 500 badge standing slightly proud of the casting. At the rear the lights are particularly good, looking like separate pieces and yes, the 'moving part' is its hatch, which has a nice Fiat logo and even a very small 500e badge to the right of the number plate.

Talking of Matchbox, I've also included their release of Citroen's Ami EV due to the family connection with Fiat. Citroen and Fiat are sister brands in the Stellantis group and Fiat have just released their



ABOVE
Takara Tomy No.16 1/59 scale Fiat 500e.

ABOVE RIGHT
1992 Fiat Cinquecento Elettra with a press picture of the real thing visible in the background.

RIGHT
DeAgostini Fiat Seicento Elettra in the livery of the Carabinieri.



Fiat Cinquecento Elettra - 1992



FIAT 600 ELETTRA 2003

version of the Ami, redesigned with 1960s 500 styling cues and called the Topolino. It's available in Verde Vita, a sort of peppermint green and the Ami in grey, and Matchbox have stuck to this colour in their rather cute reproduction. It will do in my Fiat EV line up until someone makes a Topolino.

I'll round up the 500e line-up with Bburagos excellent effort from their Street Fire range, currently the only 1/43 model of the Italian EV. This is a perfectly proportioned model, with all the features of the car picked out in chrome on a smart dark metallic grey body. The front is spectacularly good and even the cheapish wheels are of the right design. Gone are the basic lightweight castings of the old 1/43 Bburago models, this is well finished solid model with great detail. The lights front and rear are separate pieces and the Fiat badge on the hatch and reversing lights on the diffuser are beautifully done. I'm rather hoping they'll also bring one out in their usual 1/24 range and in a brighter colour as Fiat have announced that they're not making cars painted grey anymore just bright colours... I'll have mine in bright red please.

I'm now waiting for someone to bring out a model of the Abarth 500e hopefully in the outrageous launch colour of Acid Green, that would look fantastic in 1/43, and Fiat's latest EV, the 600e. Come on Bburago and Mondo you know you want to, though I rather fancy the Abarth would suit the Hot Wheels line-up pretty well.

It's been discussed in previous issues whether EVs will become a popular theme with collectors and I think the jury is still out on that, plus of course, whether or not the model manufacturers choose to make them. Personally I'm enjoying having a new collecting theme, the excuse being to keep my collection of Fiats up to date, however I've still got no desire for a real EV and I'll be sticking with the models for the foreseeable future! ■

LEFT
Bburago Street Fire 1/43 2021 Fiat 500e.

Renault 1000kg Van in miniature

Andrew Ralston takes a look at a popular post-World War Two era delivery van, and the models that followed.

MAIN IMAGE

Fourgon Service Renault, July 1949. Image: Phototheque.renault@publicislive-paris.com



ABOVE

The CIJ model of the 1000kg van appeared in many finishes, this 'Shell' livery being one of the most colourful.

BELOW

The Dutch firm Lion Car made this 'Technische Unie' van which is now extremely rare... and the box is even rarer! Image: aujouetparisien.com



Between them, the Renault 1000kg, the Citroen H and the Peugeot D3A accounted for the vast majority of delivery vans to be seen on French roads during the 1950s.

All three were equally popular in model form at the time the real ones were in production and, after a gap of some decades, they made a huge comeback thanks to the numerous partwork series which provide an opportunity for manufacturers to release a single casting in multiple liveries. Some years ago we covered models of the Citroen H van in depth in *Diecast Collector* and in 2022 models of the Peugeot were examined. This time, it's the turn of the Renault which, in one form or other, was in production between 1947 and 1965. As with the Citroen and Peugeot, the emphasis will be on obsolete models, though the survey of current production at the end of this article will give an indication of how replicas of the van have proliferated in the last few years. Though the same basic chassis was used to create various other body styles only the van will be considered here.

Launched in 1947, the Renault 1000kg van was joined two years later by a 1400kg version, both of which followed a conventional rear-wheel drive design, unlike Citroen's rival front-wheel drive H van. The Renault quickly found favour with public service users such as the army, police and post office and there was a four-wheel drive option to enable the van to cope with rougher terrain in rural areas. British cinema-goers might have caught a glimpse of a 1000kg used as a hearse in the 1968 film *Inspector Clouseau*!

Although a more modern, front-wheel drive Renault van, the Estafette, arrived in 1959 there was still a market for the old workhorse which was now renamed Voltigeur (1000kg) or Goélette (1400kg), though the old terminology of



Renault 1000kg has persisted and most toy and model makers use this simpler designation in their catalogues. The Voltigeur was finally withdrawn in 1963 and the Goélette two years later but they could, of course, be seen on French roads for many years after that.

DINKY TOYS

When studying models of this era, the starting point is invariably the Dinky Toy range, but you'll look in vain for a Renault 1000kg delivery van in a 1950s Dinky catalogue. The nearest Dinky came was to reproduce the van in the form of a military ambulance, but the fact that the red cross emblems on the sides and roof were cast into the bodywork suggests that the factory did not plan to produce any other variants. First catalogued as 80F and later renumbered as 820, the ambulance was made between 1959 and 1970 and in his book on French Dinky Jean-Michel Roulet considered that it 'was not one of the best Dinky Toys'.

MODELS BY CIJ

There was a very good reason for Dinky's comparative lack of enthusiasm for the 1000kg van. The explanation is to be found in the long-established relationship between Renault and another toy firm, CIJ (Compagnie Industrielle du Jouet). This company, based in a small town called Briare about 90 miles south of Paris, had produced tinplate 'Jouets Renaults' as promotional models since the 1930s. After the war CIJ launched a new diecast range and continued to be Renault's toymaker of



ABOVE CIJ Ambulance has a casting modification above the windscreen to accommodate the red cross transfer. Image: Vectis Auctions

LEFT Though plain in appearance, this grey finish is typical of many of the prototypes seen in daily use in France during the 1950s. Image: Vectis Auctions



ABOVE This model represents a van used to maintain the telephone network and comes with a trailer carrying two telegraph poles and cable. The picture shows the original 1950s issue but a virtually identical modern recreation by CIJ/Norev is available. Image: ajouetparisien.com

choice. Thus, it was CIJ and not Dinky that modelled the small Renault 4CV saloon that brought motoring to the masses in post-war France – a big seller for CIJ.

The opportunity to model the 1000kg gave CIJ still more scope, as a van can easily be produced in many different finishes. The basic shell was a heavy casting in approximately 1/45 scale with unglazed windows, first seen in 1955 with cast-in number plate above the rear doors, a detail that was later deleted. A characteristic of CIJ models was the use of tinplate components and this material is used on the Renault vans for the opening rear doors. As well as a panel van there was a minibus with three extra windows on each side, and a further casting used for police vans and ambulance with a single side window. Along with the minibus, these have a quirky extra feature in the form of a tinplate fold-down step to aid entry at the rear.

Looking at the various finishes in order of rarity, the most easily found are the standard issues: a plain grey delivery van, perhaps a bit boring to look at but typical of how most of the real ones would have been painted; a postal van in dark green with yellow stripe; a red and yellow 'Shell' van and a light grey van carrying the 'PTT' (Poste et Télécommunications) logo, pulling an open trailer with two telegraph poles and two rolls of wire. The ambulance comes in white with 'Ambulance Municipale' on the sides in either red or blue and there is a police van in dark blue which is almost the same casting as the ambulance except that it lacks the small mounting above the windscreen for the red cross sign. This is loosely based on a kind of police vehicle known in France as a 'panier à salade' (literally 'salad basket'). The nickname probably



ABOVE Post van is one of the easier CIJ variations to find.



ABOVE The CIJ van in 'Astra' margarine livery came in a special box.



ABOVE The Gitanes range of Matchbox-style small diecasts included a Renault 1000kg van and ambulance.



ABOVE The Renault van was a popular choice with the French Police and Gendarmerie.

comes from the resemblance between the mesh of a salad dryer and the wire grilles on the van, whose purpose was to transport prisoners. A later addition from 1962 was a military ambulance in dark green, the same casting as the white municipal one but this time fitted with a plastic interior in an attempt to bring an old model up to date.

All these models were pictured regularly in CIJ catalogues until the early 1960s but there are also some special issues which are in a completely different league. The yellow 'Astra Margarine' van comes in a special box which suggests it may have been used for promotional purposes but it was also on general sale. Though quite hard to find, it is not as rare as the yellow 'Teinturerie' (dye-works and dry-cleaning) livery, the light blue and white 'Boucherie' (butchers) van or the two-tone green/cream colours of 'Primistères', a retailer of food and wine. Also of legendary rarity are two specials for export markets: a Belgian post van in red and a German equivalent in yellow with 'Deutsche Bundespost' markings.

Obviously, models such as these rarely come up for sale and, as with Dinky Toys, the occasional CIJ 'one-off' colour trial has emerged, invariably fetching a record price. The regular issues, however, are not hard to find mint and boxed for around £100 upwards.

Another avenue to building up a CIJ Renault van collection would be to collect the replicas made in China by Norev. The 2007 launch catalogue for this series shows the van in red/yellow 'Shell' colours and in grey 'PTT' livery with trailer. The following year the ambulance appeared in white and military green along with the 'Boucherie' van, all three being listed as limited editions of 1000 pieces. The 'Primistères' livery was also on sale in 2008 but is not pictured in the catalogue. After a few years of rapid expansion, the range dried up, but a couple of years ago there was an unexpected addition: an attractively boxed Belgian postal set containing two red Renault vans, the 1000kg and the smaller 'Dauphinoise' 300 kg. These models are all very close to the originals in appearance and while technically now obsolete are still easy to obtain.

SMALL SCALE

The success of the British Matchbox series of small scale toy vehicles didn't go unnoticed in France. Majorette was by far the most successful French equivalent and is still very much with us, but before that there were one



ABOVE LEFT The real thing. Developed from the 1000kg panel van, 36 examples of this 4 x 4 version were bought by the Gendarmerie between 1961 and 1963. These would have been used as command vehicles to communicate with officers on the ground.



LEFT A Type R2060 van built for touring, July 1952.



ABOVE The Renault 1000kg van was a no-frills workhorse used by many French businesses and public service organisations. This preserved example can be seen in the Musée Automobile de Valençay in the Loire Valley. Image: www.musee-auto-valençay.fr

or two other French Matchbox 'lookalikes' which did not make much impact. One of these appeared around 1957 under the name Gitanes. That was the name of a famous Gallic cigarette brand, though whether there was any direct connection between the toys and the tobacco maker is not clear. A couple of Gitanes models took direct inspiration from Matchbox, but most were original French subjects and one was the 1000kg Renault, available as an ambulance or delivery van in plain grey and in 'Gaz de France' and 'Postes' liveries. CIJ, too, entered this field with their 'Micro Miniatures' where the 1000kg van was produced in plain grey and as a civilian or military ambulance.

PLASTIC

The 1000kg van is a curious omission in the biggest 1950s French plastic toy car range, Norev, but rival firm Minialuxe did model it as part of their 1/32 scale series in 1955. The larger dimensions allowed a sliding side door to be fitted though with the passage of time the plastic tends to warp and the door is often stuck in the closed position. This has been seen in plain blue, grey, yellow and green but it reappeared in a late sixties catalogue in yellow postal livery, now brightened up with plated hubs. No doubt taking inspiration from the livery of the diecast CIJ, a simple plastic 10cm long 'Teinturerie' van turns up occasionally, in a plain box with no markings to give a clue to the maker.

Collecting plastic cars compatible with model railways in HO scale is particularly popular in Germany

and Brekina currently offers a 1000kg van with many livery variations. The van has also been recently modelled in plastic in this scale by Norev, while in Japan there was an on-pack offer with Volvic mineral water which included a pullback-friction driven Renault in 'Danone' yoghurt livery in three different colours.

LION CAR

The theme so far seems to be that the less well-known makers such as CIJ and Minialuxe favoured the Renault 1000kg van over bigger brands like Dinky and Norev. Still more surprising, though, is to find this French van attracting the attention of a Dutch toy company: Lion Car, later known as Lion Toys. This make is mainly associated with the DAF trucks produced in the 1980s in multiple liveries. From 1956 onwards, however, Lion made a small series of cars and vans which included interesting choices of vehicle such as the rarely modelled DKW, the Renault 4CV and, naturally, several versions of Holland's own car, the DAF. The first Lion commercial vehicle was a Renault van similar to the CIJ but a little smaller at 1/50 scale. It does not have opening doors but is fitted with window glazing and comes in two colourful finishes: a postal van ('Posterijen') in red with a black roof and in the green and black colours of Technische Unie (Technical Union), a well-known Dutch company supplying technical and industrial equipment. Like the CIJ, a modern replica of this exists, one of a set of models released in 2005 to mark the 125th anniversary of TU.



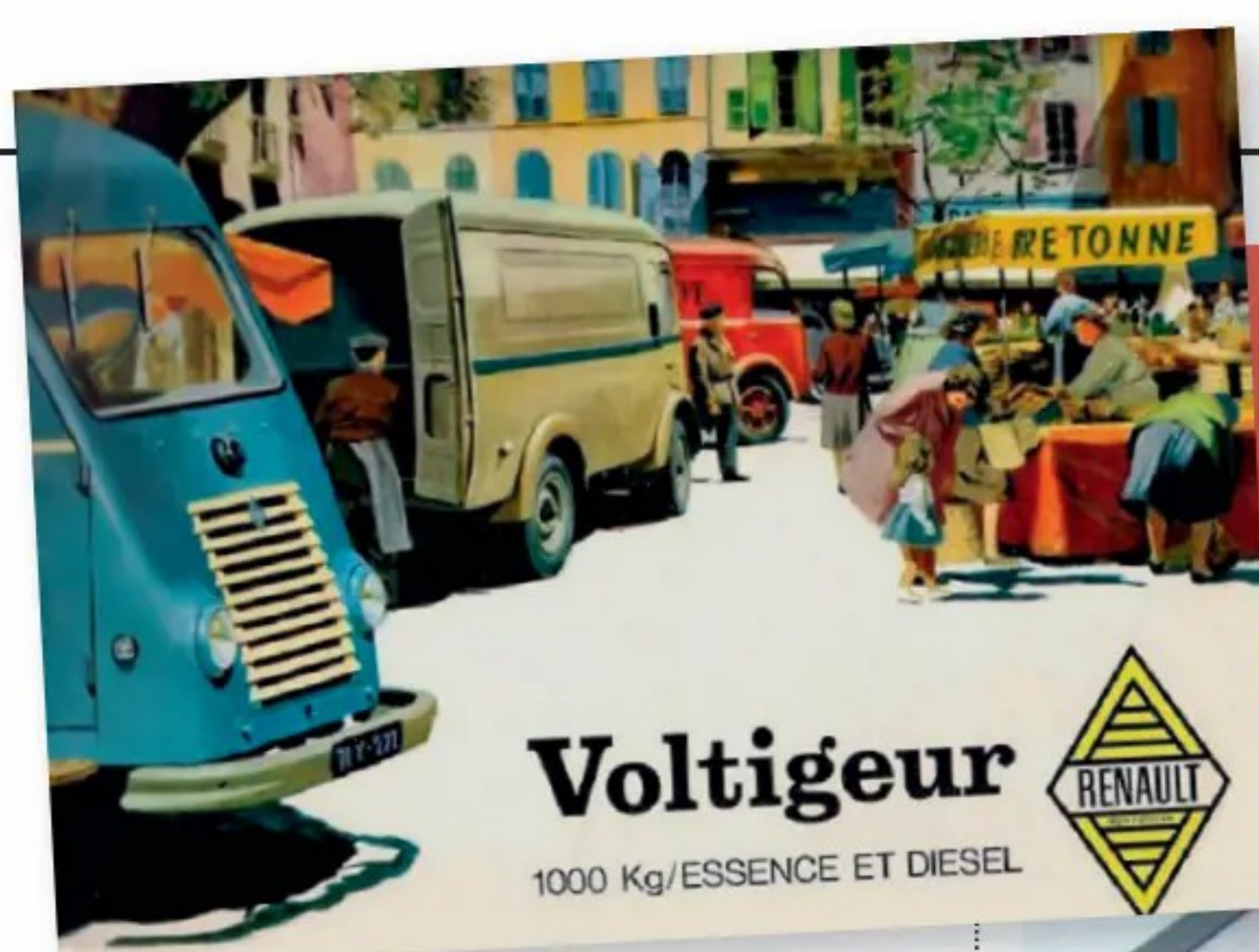
ABOVE 'Boucherie' (butchers) livery was a scarce CIJ variation but it is now available again as a replica marketed by Norev in a limited edition of 1000 pieces.



ABOVE A simple plastic van in 'Teinturerie' (dye-works) livery, made by an unidentified maker.

BELOW Minibus has side windows and a fold-down step at the rear and comes in the livery of French railways (SNCF). Image: ajouetparisien.com





ABOVE In 1959 Renault renamed the 1000kg van the 'Voltigeur' which, according to the French dictionary, means 'acrobat'. Perhaps the name was meant to highlight the adaptability and manoeuvrability of the van. This colourful brochure illustration contrasts with the austerity of the earlier publications and reflects the growing prosperity of the late fifties.

RIGHT This diorama re-enacts a scene from the Tintin story 'Explorers on the Moon' and comes from the Atlas Editions collection of Tintin vehicles.



This is in a similar colour finish to the original but the words 'Technische Unie' have been replaced by 'Heybroek Zelander', H C Heybroek being the founder of the firm in 1880. Unlike the CIJ, the recent Lion Toy is not a modern copy made in China but a genuine product of the Lion company, made in Holland. This is still easily obtainable whereas the original is not, especially with the box.

RECENT ISSUES

Gradually, the Renault 1000kg gave way to more modern vans and disappeared in model form for many years until the revival of interest in classic transport of a bygone era in the 1990s led to the emergence of many new diecast models aimed specifically at collectors.

The earliest of these newer ranges to take an interest in the Renault van was Macadam who, according to information on the box, made the models in Portugal and distributed them via a Geneva-based firm called Hapax. Apart from a number of rally and supercars, some in 1/20 scale, the 1/43 Renault van seems to have been Macadam's main offering and it was produced in a large number of liveries. A few of these, such as the French postal van and military ambulance, harked back to the CIJ era, but the majority were in colourful liveries advertising products such as 'Valentine, la belle peinture' (green), 'Martini' (metallic blue), and 'Olibet' biscuits (white).

A simpler replica of the van (c. 1/55 scale) can be found in the Lledo Days Gone series in yellow with 'Automobiles Renault' lettering, and this casting was later used by Corgi in the French 'Camions d'Antan' and Italian 'Camions d'Epoca' partwork series. There are only a few livery variations on this model, but the opposite is the case with the larger 1/43 scale version in the Corgi Classics 'Heritage' series of French commercial vehicles. In 2000 a red 'Service Incendie' (fire) van was the first of some forty Corgi variants on the 1000kg. Corgi researched many more colourful

advertising liveries such as 'Royal Mint' chewing gum in pink and white, 'Pernod' in blue and yellow, 'Chicorée Williot' (brown) and many others, taking the level of decoration further by fitting elaborate roof signs and loudspeakers as used on the publicity caravan of vehicles following the Tour de France cycle race, from which free gifts or samples of the products advertised were thrown out to excited children in the crowds lining the route.

Perhaps too many variations were issued too quickly so that the market became saturated with the result that these 'limited edition' vans are still obtainable, usually at less than the original price.

The theme of advertising vans was to get yet another boost with the development of the 'partwork' method of marketing which encouraged collectors to subscribe to a regular series of models with accompanying magazines providing historical background – a trend that has proved most lucrative for manufacturers like Norev, Eligor, Ixo and, to a lesser extent Solido. As a result, many more 1000kg vans appeared as partworks as well as regular issues on general sale. There are also some bizarre looking vehicles with special coachwork built for the Tour de France that look nothing like a Renault van but in fact cover the humble 1000kg mechanicals in weird and wonderful disguises – one is even a miniature castle with turrets advertising a wine called 'Castelvin'. Keeping up with all of them would be a full time occupation and the 'cherry-picking' approach of buying just the ones you like is a better option.

The last word can be left to the French collector Vincent Espinasse who runs the well-known Paris model shop 'L'Auto Jaune'. Being a specialist in vintage toys, Vincent is in no doubt which Renault 1000kg model he likes best. "It's amusing to observe," he writes on his blog, "that even the current products do not offer models as faithful as the CIJ. From a technical point of view, features like the opening back doors in tinfoil and the folding footstand are miniature masterpieces." ■



ABOVE A bizarre publicity model for the 1952 Tour De France advertising 'Le Nain Gourmand' confectionery. The model is by Norev. Look carefully and you'll see a Renault 1000kg underneath all the decorations.



ABOVE Macadam also offered a series of postcards showing some of the liveries available.





Land Rover

Steve Coles continues his series comparing vintage models with their present day counterparts.

The previous *Then and Now* article (Diecast Collector, February) detailed two very similar models and the closest in age seen so far in this series. This month's is hopefully going to challenge even further as we are focussing on a trio of models aimed squarely at the collector's market.

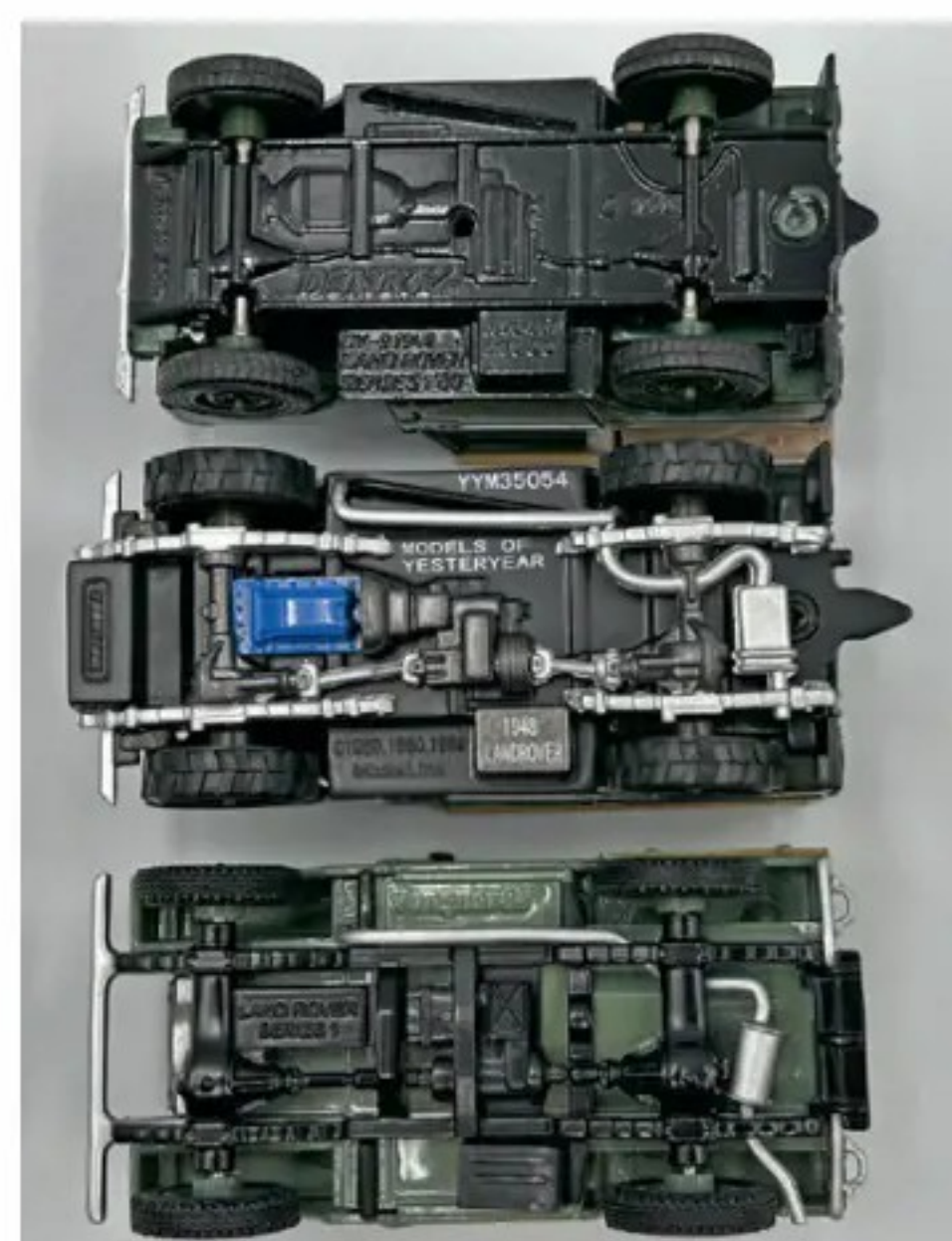
The idea for the first Land Rover was conceived in 1947 during the aftermath of World War II. It was intended to be in production for only two or three years to gain some cash flow and export orders for the Rover Company. The trouble was, once production of Rover's more luxury cars restarted, the Land Rover easily outsold all car production.

The Land Rover started as a single model with an 80-inch wheelbase, and this was a basic vehicle; even the tops for the doors and a roof (canvas or metal) were optional extras. In 1950, the lights moved from a position behind the grille to protruding through the grille. The 1954 model saw the 80-inch wheelbase model replaced by an 86-inch and a 107-inch wheelbase pick up version was introduced. It is these early 80-inch Series 1 Land Rovers that are now the most revered by enthusiasts. It is also these early 80-inch models that are the focus of this month's *Then and Now*. We shall begin, as always, with the oldest.

Introduced in 1988 as part of Matchbox's new Dinky Collection of collector's models, this green Series 1 was one of the first proper models I had (along with the Matchbox Dinky MGB). The basic overall shape is good and captures the very simple lines of the original Land Rover well. I particularly like the representation of the canvas back, with small crease lines cast in to the moulded plastic part. There

ABOVE Left to right, oldest to newest; Matchbox Dinky Collection (1988), Matchbox Collectibles (1995), Corgi Vanguard (2008). All capture the very distinctive shape of the very first 80-inch wheelbase Land Rover.

INSET RIGHT The same view of the same car and here we have three different takes on it. Only the 1995 Matchbox (centre) has incorrect headlights. An interesting mix of chrome, silver and grey paint for the front detailing.



ABOVE Top to bottom: 1988 Matchbox, 1995 Matchbox and Corgi Vanguard. The earliest model has minimal underbody and chassis detail when compared to the newer two models.

is also a good level of detail cast in, but much of this goes unnoticed as its not picked out. The highlight of this is probably the bonnet which has the hinges, rivets and closing pins all cast in. It also has front and rear number plates cast in, but the registration EDP999 (belonging to an actual 80-inch Series 1) is almost lost. The door hinges and metal that runs around the top of the metal bodywork is, by contrast, picked out in silver. The windscreen central divide and wipers are picked out in an incorrect chrome finish, as is the front bumper which makes the whole frontal appearance look a little strange. This view is rescued however by a delightful mesh front grille that is finished in a dark grey, which is possibly too dull, that correctly 'covers' the headlights (which are picked out in silver). One of my favourite features of the whole model has to be the large 'Land Rover' rear mudflaps.

Underneath, detail is minimal with a crude representation of the gearbox, differentials and exhaust. By contrast, the interior is rather more charming. Take the canvas back off and there is another spare wheel and rear bench seats in the pick-up area. Up front are three seats, with the central instrument cluster and heater pipes cast into the dashboard moulding. There is also a representation of the sliding door windows. Overall then, and a bit like the real thing, this is quite a basic model.

Moving on and the next model is also from Matchbox. This is from 1995 and was sold, by mail





order, under the banner 'Matchbox Collectibles Collection'. My reason for including it here, as the 'middle' model of the three in terms of age, is that it uses the same tooling as the 1988 release so would be an interesting comparison with the earlier Dinky Collection model. First impressions are good. The 7 year difference is immediately noticeable. The familiar dark green paint is a little glossier than the earlier model, while the canvas back is the identical. It is the level of detailing that really lifts this model. The door hinges and metalwork along the sides are once again picked in silver but on this model the windscreen surround is also silver, as are the bonnet hinges and catches. The front bumper is more accurately finished in silver paint rather than the chrome look of the earlier model and while the front grille is much brighter, almost too bright, it has the headlamps incorrectly in front instead of behind the mesh. Round the back are the wonderful mudflaps and on this model the tail lamps and reflectors are picked out in red. The one notable omission on this model is the number plate. The tooling was obviously modified and has had the letters and numbers erased, allowing Matchbox to release several different liveries. The wheels are the same as the older model, but this one has the wheel bolts painted silver and much chunkier, almost agricultural, off road tyres fitted.

Where this model does really trump its older cousin is underneath. A totally new base was made for this model. Replacing the original's black metal base is a black plastic one. Attached to the plastic are a whole range of separate plastic details; leaf springs front and rear, prop shafts and exhaust are all separate silver parts while the front and rear differentials, transfer box and gearbox are grey parts. Finally, the bottom of the engine is finished in blue. This model really ought to be displayed sat on a mirror; this level of detail is extraordinary. The only gripe I have with this model is that all this under body detail gives the model almost no ground clearance at all; the rear diff is less than 2mm from the ground. Something most un-Land Rover like.

The final model of the trio comes from the Corgi Vanguard's range. Launched in 2008, this first release

ABOVE Only the Corgi Vanguard's (right) has the rear chassis crossmember painted in silver and the canvas back in the closed position.



ABOVE The same wheels were used on the 1995 release as well as this original 1988 Matchbox. Without the silver bolts and less chunky tyres, they look rather plain here.



ABOVE The cockpit of the 1988 Matchbox shows a decent level of detail. Also noticeable is the thickness of the windscreen and side windows.



ABOVE The steering wheel detail, central dials and separate gear lever are much clearer and accurate on the newer Corgi model.

numbered VA11101 commemorates Land Rover's 60th Anniversary. HUE166 was the first production Land Rover and Corgi chose this famous Landy for their first Series 1 release. The shape is spot-on; and it is identical in length, width and height as its older Matchbox relations. One of the notable differences is the height of the front windscreen. When parked side-by-side, the Matchbox one is not tall enough, with too much height given to the opening vent flap under the screen. The lighter green paint certainly helps the finer cast in details show up, but much of that detail has been, correctly, picked out in silver.

In terms of details; the front grille is a true gem, and one of the nicest details I've seen on a model. A slightly matted silver finish partially masks the headlights. Sat centrally is a tiny Land Rover oval badge. The rear has the tail lights as well as the tiny round reflectors picked out in red. Photos of HUE166 show it doesn't have the characteristic mudflaps and this model is, correctly, missing them. The underbody detail is excellent, matching the newer of the two Matchbox in terms of what is represented. Sadly, much of it on the Corgi is black with the exception of the exhaust, which is picked out in silver and is the only one of the three to show it exiting the car just behind the rear offside wheel.

Where this newer model does show the age of the Matchbox tooling is in the front windscreen and side windows. On the Corgi, they are much thinner and therefore look more in scale. It even has the correct semaphore trafficators that were fitted on the Series 1. So how does the 'Then' model(s) match up to the 'Now'? Being quite a basic vehicle, the models are also similarly basic. The Corgi is the best of the three; the levels of detail and thinner screen give it the edge. Which is my favourite of these three? That's a harder question to answer. I'm very attached to the 1988 Matchbox Dinky, I love the levels of detail the much newer Corgi has, but for sheer effort of adding detail my pick would be the 1995 Matchbox Collectibles... So much so, that since I started writing this I'm now actively looking for the other Matchbox Collectibles Land Rovers! ■

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Superfast 1969-1982

Charting the evolution of the Matchbox Superfast range during the Lesney years, from 1969 to 1982.

LAND ROVER FIRE TRUCK

Production: 1970

Catalogue: never appeared as a Superfast

Box Styles: G

An incredibly hard to find former regular wheels Superfast is the Land Rover Fire Truck. It was so short-lived that it never even made it into the catalogue as a Superfast, being replaced in the 1970 range presented in the catalogue prior to it being printed – it was only in production for a few months.

Other than the new style wheels, there were no other really notable changes for the most mysterious of models apart from some very minor tweaks to the labels.

Expect to pay a small fortune for a mint model in a similar condition box.

ECCLES CARAVAN

Production: 1970-73

Catalogue: 1970-73

Box Styles: G

Eccles Caravan is based on a real caravan produced by the Eccles company of Birmingham. Being a large, twin-axle van, it was able to stand on its own four wheels without having to balance on the towing hitch. The main body, which included the base and sides, was painted cream, with a brown stripe label along the sides. The removable roof was in orange plastic, and the detailed interior – which included sink, cooker, cupboards and seating area – was moulded in dark green. However, there was no glazing.

In 1971, the paper label was changed to include a red flower to the rear of the sides, and the following year the paint colour was changed to a light yellow. In 1976 it was revived for the Two Packs series until it ended in 1982.

WILD LIFE TRUCK

Range: Rola-matics

Production: 1973-81

Catalogue: 1974-81

Box Styles: I, J

Wild Life Truck uses the same basic Ford F-Series casting as both No.6 Ford Pick-Up and No.50 Kennel Truck. Produced in bright yellow for most of its life but white with black zebra markings for its final catalogue appearance. In the back, under the clear canopy, a very small lion paces around as the truck drives along.

One of the most popular Rola-Matics, it remained in the range for an impressive eight years.



After being withdrawn, the casting was modified into No.35 Pick-Up Camper, available from 1985 in the United Kingdom.

CARMICHAEL RESCUE VEHICLE

Production: 1982

Catalogue: 1982

Box Styles: L

Carmichael Rescue Vehicle, aka Carmichael Commando, was based on a vehicle produced by the Worcester-based specialist fire-fighting company. It was a modified Range Rover, with an added third axle and utility rear body, featuring two blue light domes to the front of the roof.

The model was finished in white with orange and black "Police Rescue" decals – an unusual choice given that the Carmichael Commando was normally used as an airport crash tender, particularly at military air bases. It had a black plastic base, and a grey interior that also incorporated the grille, closed side shutters and a half-open rear shutter showing some rescue implements.

The windows and dome lights were blue-tinted, while there was a short black plastic ladder on the roof.

For 1984, Matchbox International changed the model to a more realistic fire vehicle and it was painted red all over with white decals picking out "FIRE" in red. It was referred to on the box as just "Carmichael", although technically it was still a rescue vehicle, obviously. ■

A-Z of diecast



Concluding the letter L, **Alwyn Brice** moves on to M.

If you are really into the obscure stuff, then you'll want to track down an example of a diecast produced by Swedish company Lenyko. Patience might be a desirable asset for you in the search, though, for the manufacturer ceased production in 1963, following a factory fire.

Distributor Gösta Norén started producing 1/43 scale diecast models of the Volvo PV 444 in Gothenburg in 1957 under the brand name of Lenyko, although, confusingly, models were also marketed under the name of Geno. Baseplates differentiate the two; so if Swedish models are your thing, you'll need to track down both.

WIZARD STUFF

Merlin is yet another of those obscure English manufacturers about which rather little is actually known. These diecasts were made in north London by TAL Developments, which was one of a number of diecast companies that appeared in that region in the aftermath of World War Two.

Only two models are known to emanate from this company: a WW2 Ford/Willys Jeep and a single-seater racing car, which is generally agreed to be reminiscent of a Maserati. Both of these models are single piece castings and if you overlook the somewhat eclectic choice of subject matter, you can have some fun tracking down not one but four models. Why four? Well, both can be found with or without the necessary cogs and starting handle that allow for the attachment of an elastic band with which to power the model. To aid identification (for you are unlikely to ever see a box), both have Merlin cast into the underside, together with a reference number. Around 1/43 in scale terms, they are simple models but, fortunately, which do turn up from time to time. It is thought that the racing car model was

ABOVE Stunning Norton from the Manx circuit, circa 1960. In 1/12 scale, this Minichamps bike really looks the business.



ABOVE One of the two Merlin models; this one is said to be reminiscent of a Maserati.

LEFT Underside of a Merlin racing car, which was fitted with a simple propulsion system.



The Merlin Jeep, based on the iconic US Willys/Ford vehicle, star of every war film.

ABOVE
Who doesn't love a Mini? This 1/43 Minichamps example boasts good detailing and an opening bonnet.



ABOVE
The doughty Bullock version of the 25pdr field gun, something that was modelled by many companies.



ABOVE
Coastal gun and box from Bullock. Two versions can be found.



ABOVE
CLenyko's Volvo PV444 in understated grey: not an easy model to track down, in any colour.

copied to a large degree from the Timpo example; a very similar Maserati model is also found in the Jolly Roger range, and further likenesses have surfaced in the Minitoy and Gasquy Sep-Toy output, leading to speculation over shared dies or possibly pirated work.

FROM GERMANY TO CHINA

Germany-headquartered Minichamps has been around for quite a while; a background in white metal castings underpins the range that moved into the diecast arena in the early 1990s, under the aegis of one Paul Gunter. Paul, with his enterprise Paul's Model Art, was subsequently instrumental in outsourcing production (in this case to China), and since that time, the company has traded on a reputation for detailed miniatures aimed at the adult collector. Today its range encompasses the large 1/12 scale (catering in the main for the motorcycle enthusiast), as well as popular 1/64, 1/43 and 1/18 scales.

The motorbike selection is something of an Aladdin's cave for the collector more focussed on two wheels: colourful liveries and plenty of detail, with the added bonus of riders (in the main Valentino Rossi, it has to be said), combine to make these models most attractive.

In terms of four-wheeled vehicles, there are both track cars and road cars available. Today, though, sees more work done in the resin department, in keeping with upping the accuracy and finish. The company's 1/43 range would keep any car enthusiast engrossed for years, for it is truly vast. Here mundane transport, such as the Ford Galaxy MPV, rubs shoulders with

the truly exotic, such as the Maserati Ghibli Spider. Anniversary models, which translate into limited runs (possibly under 3,000 units) keep collectors on their toes but the best news is that Minichamps prices remain affordable: even the earlier output has yet to skyrocket in price. Could the time be right to dip a toe into the water?

HEAVYWEIGHT CONTENDER

Whilst researching this huge undertaking for the *Diecast Collector*, I was often struck by the number of companies who produce (or produced) diecast models, but not necessarily those that you'd glimpse on the highway or at the racetrack. Should they be included? It was something to ponder on, if I'm honest. But I make no excuse for the inclusion of the next manufacturer, simply because the quality of its products was so exceptional.

MSR Toys was responsible for the Bullock range of cannon and guns that appeared shortly after the World War Two; specifically, Bullock Toys was listed as trading in sunny Bournemouth, back in 1946. I say "cannon" and "guns" but in fact MSR did deviate from the vehicles of warfare to manufacture a farm trailer. However, this seems to be about the sum total of the company's non-belligerent output. A couple of years later, it appears, the company was purchased by the Metropolitan Sliding Roof Company, which was located further along the coast in Brighton. Production would continue until 1964.

When we talk about Bullock we talk about attention to detail and accuracy. Coastal guns, anti-aircraft guns and field artillery are all to be found within its finite (and very collectable) range but the emphasis for Bullock was definitely on realism. Take the 25-pounder field gun, that stalwart of the British Army during WW2: aping the real thing, there's a lanyard to pull in order to actually release the firing mechanism; this is found on other models, too. Each model came with a colourful box which also could include a spare spring and wooden shells. Paint finish was good (typically khaki green) and mobile guns were equipped with realistic tyres.

These artillery pieces of a bygone age still turn up today, six decades on; and for the most part, they have survived well. Definitely a range to look out for. ■



Corgi through the years

Rick Wilson continues his series of year-by-year articles from the beginning of the brand in 1956. We continue the series with the models released during the second half of 1979.



ABOVE
No.154 Texaco F1 in the new style box Image: Rick Wilson

BELOW
No.279 Rolls-Royce Corniche in various later colours. Image: Vectis

The second half of 1979 continued on from the first six months of the year with no less than 10 comic book, TV & Film-related releases out of a total of 14. By and large, they proved to be pretty popular and this was very much helping the company during a tricky period of vastly-reduced profits due mainly to investments in other areas.

Corgi kicked off the second half of the year with four new releases during July, three of which fell into the aforementioned lot of comic book character-related items. No.263 Captain America Jetmobile was simply a repaint of No.169 Starfighter Jet Car, released in February 1973. Now painted white, with a black rubber nose and red plastic wheels, it was adorned with patriotic red, white and blue stickers and featured a Captain America figure in the cockpit (canopy now removed) brandishing his trademark shield. Lasting for a couple of years, it sold a shade over 80,000. Another 'fantasy' reworking saw the No.397 Porsche-Audi

Can-Am 917/10 racer now reimagined as the transport of Captain Marvel. Featuring bright, red/blue/yellow stickering, this also had a figure in the cockpit. It was replaced in the catalogue during 1980 and sold just in excess of 75,000.

The third of the comic book releases for July was yet another use of the Mazda Pick-up casting. Painted either light or dark metallic brown, the rear deck was topped by a plastic cage (either red or grey) with a green Incredible Hulk figure bursting through the top as No.264. A bonnet sticker finished off this intriguing model. Hanging around in the range for three years, sales for this one were much better at over 350,000 units. Finally, for July a rather impressive model of the stylish Rolls-Royce Corniche (No.279) was launched. Originally produced in a sumptuous dark metallic red, this could later be found in varying shades of blue and white/cream and lasted well beyond the Mettoy-ownership years.





August saw a bumper six new releases, four of which fell into the dominant category of the year. No.261 Spiderbuggy was basically the No.419 Jeep, now in red with a blue bonnet. Spidey drives, whilst a blue plastic crane and jib, mounted in the back, holds a plastic bag printed with a web on either side which is keeping The Green Goblin in check. No.259 Penguinmobile used No.167 US Racing Buggy as a base with The Penguin driving and his famous, colourful umbrella mounted to the top.

The next two releases were from the latest James Bond movie, *Moonraker*. No.649 James Bond Space Shuttle was brand new tooling and was the result of working closely with the film franchise to have this ready for the movie's premiere in London. The space shuttle was in white with a black underside and the carried orangey-yellow and black markings. The top bay doors opened, revealing a nicely-modelled satellite payload. This proved very popular and lasted in the range for three years, selling well over 400,000. To match the shuttle, No.930 Drax Helicopter was a repaint of No.926 Stromberg Jet Ranger, made for the previous Bond movie. Now in white with yellow rotor blades and Drax branding, it might have only lasted in the range for a year, but over 150,000 were sold during this time.

The two more mainstream releases during August were No.1109 Michelin Articulated Truck and No.437 Coca-Cola Van. The 1/48-scale truck comprised the



LEFT
No.279 Rolls-Royce Corniche. Image: Vectis

ABOVE
No.263 Captain America Jetmobile and No 262 Captain Marvel Porsche. Image: Vectis



ABOVE
No.259 Penguinmobile. Image: Vectis

RIGHT
No.264 The Incredible Hulk. Image: Vectis



newer Ford Tilt Cab, painted blue and adorned by a Michelin Man figure on the roof, pulling a reworked trailer originally seen on No.1147 Ferrymasters Mack-hauled combination from December 1969. With the trailer painted blue to match the cab unit, the covers were moulded in the same yellow as before, but now bore allegiance to Michelin, of course. The 1/36-scale Coca-Cola Van was another version of the popular Chevy Van, this time painted red with white Coca-



Corgi Toys 1979 releases – July to December					
No	Title	Scale	Released	Withdrawn	Sales
154	Texaco Special Lotus Formula 1	1/36	November	-	155,000+
259	Penguinmobile	-	August	1980	125,000
261	Spiderbuggy	-	August	1981	224,000
262	Captain Marvel Porsche	-	July	1980	76,000
263	Captain America Jetmobile	-	July	1981	82,000
264	The Incredible Hulk	-	July	1982	369,000
265	Supermobile	-	September	1982	335,000
266	Spiderbike	-	September	-	301,000+
279	Rolls-Royce Corniche	1/36	July	-	363,000+
437	Coca-Cola Van	1/36	August	1980	75,000
649	James Bond Space Shuttle	-	August	1982	430,000
928	Spidercopter	-	October	1982	130,000
930	Drax Helicopter	-	August	1980	157,000
1109	Michelin Articulated Truck	1/48	August	1980	50,000

Source: *The Great Book of Corgi 1956-1983*



ABOVE
No.437 Coca-Cola Van. Image: Vectis



ABOVE
No.261 Spiderbuggy & Green Goblin. Image: Vectis



ABOVE
No.930 Drax Jet Ranger. Image: Vectis

Cola graphics to the sides. Both only lasted for a year and sold 50,000 and 75,000 respectively.

Moving into September and there were two further comic book-related issues. No.266 Spiderbike was based on No.268 Batbike, now in black, red and blue and with a red plastic moulded web to the rear, plus a Spiderman figure, of course. No.265 Supermobile was actually based on a vehicle that appeared briefly in the comic book strip. Mainly blue, with red detailing, it featured two rocket-firing cannons, one on either flank.

There was just one newbie for October and it was another Spiderman transport, this time in the shape of a helicopter. No.928 Spidercopter, in blue and red, of course, was a totally imaginary creation in the bizarre form of half spider, half scorpion. It featured

Corgi Toys 1979 July to December releases production colours

No	Title	Colours produced
154	Texaco Special Lotus Formula 1	Black/gold
259	Penguinmobile	White/yellow
261	Spiderbuggy	Blue/red
262	Captain Marvel Porsche	White/red/blue/yellow
263	Captain America Jetmobile	White/red/blue/black
264	The Incredible Hulk	Metallic brown/red or metallic brown/grey
265	Supermobile	Blue/red
266	Spiderbike	Black/red/blue
279	Rolls-Royce Corniche	Dark red, white or various shades of blue
437	Coca-Cola Van	Red/white
649	James Bond Space Shuttle	White/yellow/black
928	Spidercopter	Blue/red
930	Drax Helicopter	White/yellow
1109	Michelin Articulated Truck	Blue/yellow

Source: The Great Book of Corgi 1956-1983



ABOVE
No.266 Spiderbike. Image: Vectis

BELOW
No.1109 Articulated Truck. Image: Vectis

BOTTOM
No.928 Spidercopter and No.265 Supermobile. Image: Vectis

an extending tongue to catch flies. An odd choice of design perhaps, it nevertheless managed to last in the range for three years.

Rounding out the year's new releases, in November, was a re-stickered version of No.154 JPS racing car. Keeping the same catalogue number, all JPS-sponsorship was removed and replaced by Texaco as the main 'sponsor'. This marked the removal of the last model in the range that carried tobacco sponsorship and it makes for an interesting comparison alongside the original release.

There will now be a short break in this series, whilst a few remaining models are acquired for photography. But, rest assured, we'll be back to detail the new models that went on sale during the first half of 1980 and beyond soon! Be sure to check out future issues of *Diecast Collector*. ■



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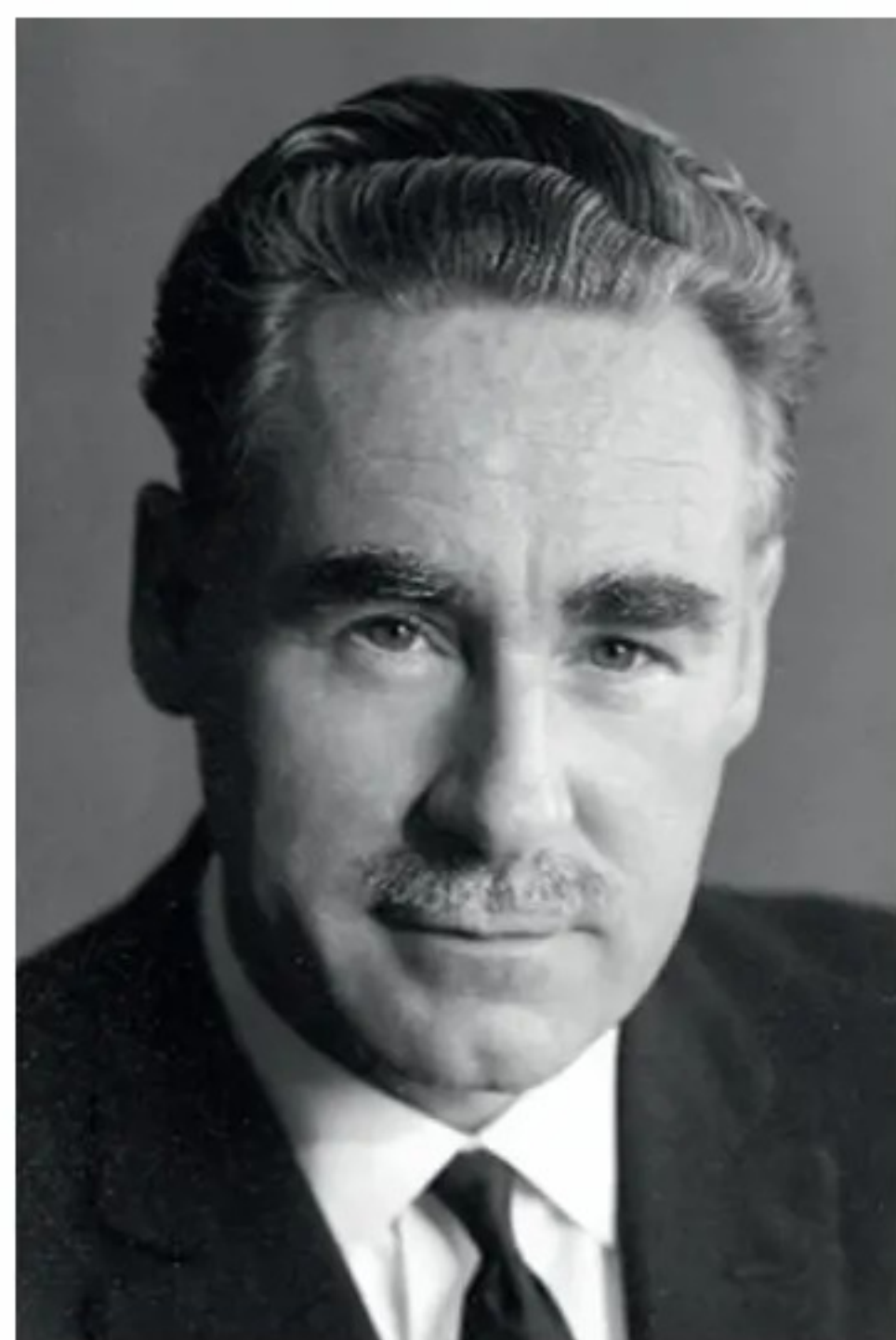
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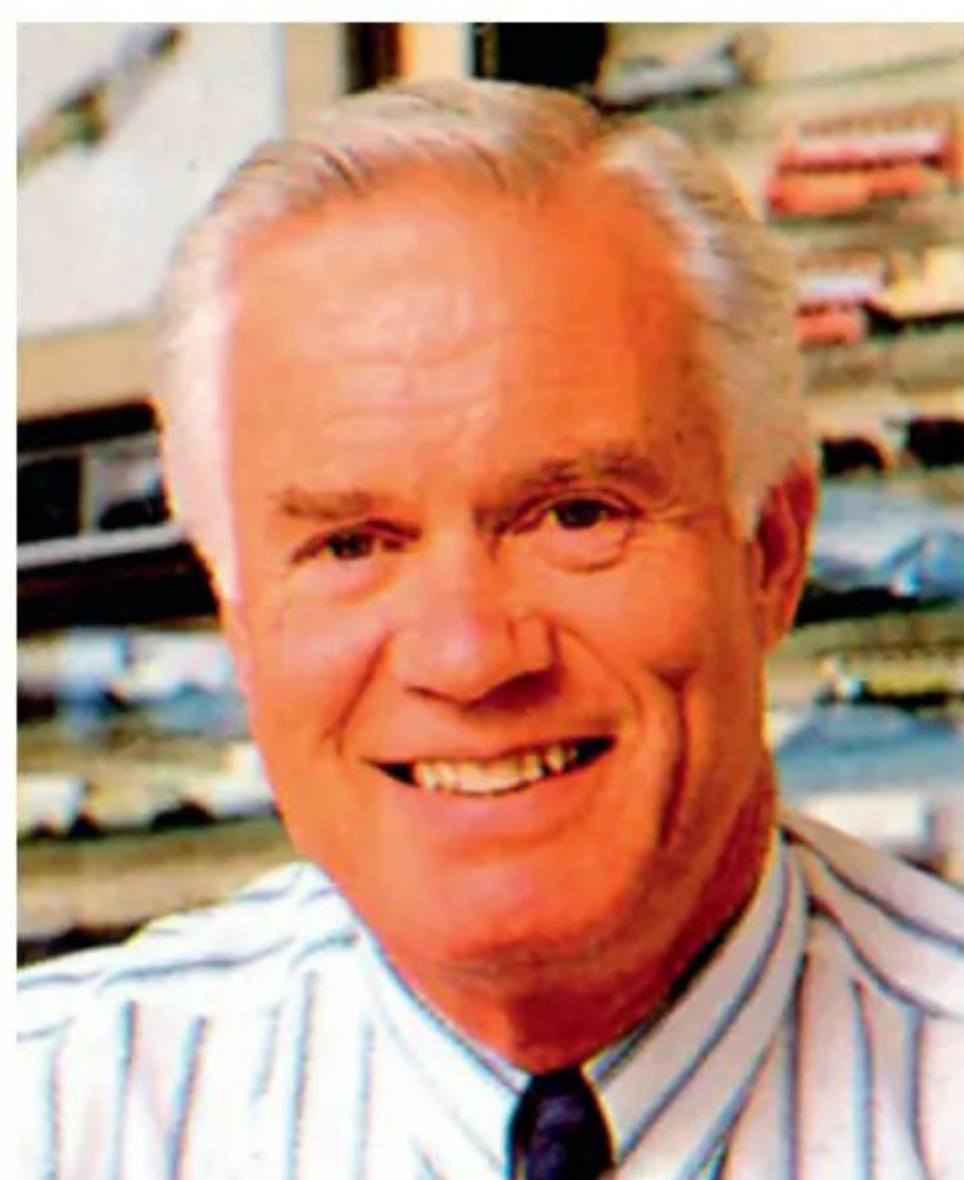
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The Lledo story

Paul Lumsdon revisits the early days of the Lledo company as we look back over more than 40 years of quality diecast models.



ABOVE
Jack Odell, in a photograph taken in 1968.



ABOVE
Bert Russell, Lledo's Managing Director.



ABOVE
Ray Penn, Lledo's Operations Director.

RIGHT
DG03009 Horse Drawn Delivery Van, with Hamleys Toyshop livery. Image: lledoshuffle.co.uk

Lledo (London) was founded during the summer of 1982 by Jack Odell and Bert Russell following the collapse of the Lesney empire, which Jack had helped to create way back in 1947. To fully understand the history of Lledo it is necessary to know a little about the Lesney story too.

Two years after the end of World War Two, in 1947, John Odell (known as Jack to everyone) became the third partner in the business set up by Lesley Smith and Rodney Smith (who were not related). Business was difficult in the early years and Rodney departed in 1951, thinking there was little potential. As Lesley was a sales and marketing man, it was left to Jack's skill as an engineer to design and produce the first prototypes of what became the world famous Matchbox miniatures.

Lesney went on to become the world's largest toy manufacturer employing around 9500 people. Production at its peak, in the mid-1960s, reached a staggering one million models per day!

In 1973 Jack retired as a director of Lesney although he did remain as vice chairman. These were difficult times. The business was under intense pressure from the likes of Mattel, whose Hot Wheels models were a huge success, as well as the likes of Corgi, Dinky and other toy manufacturers who were primarily based in the Far East.

By 1980, the financial pressures on Lesney were such that it was forced into receivership. In a bid to save the company Jack was persuaded by the receivers to come out of retirement and work as a consultant. Sadly, it was too late and Lesney ceased trading in June 1982. The Matchbox name was sold to Universal of Hong Kong and manufacturing was immediately transferred overseas.

Jack had, however, found a new lease of life out of retirement and was convinced that there was still a market for British produced models for British customers and so he set about creating a new model diecasting company. The models produced were to be aimed at a more adult collector market, rather than as purely toys for children. He crucially recognised that the baby-boomer children of the 1950s and 1960s were growing up and he wanted to offer them the chance to indulge in some pure nostalgia from the youth. This turned out to be a stroke of genius! In the summer of 1982, he partnered up the former Lesney employee Bert Russell and they set up Lledo (London) Ltd near Enfield in North London.

The company name has its own story and despite its rather celtic double 'L' spelling, has absolutely nothing to do with Wales. During the war Jack served with the

army in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers and reached the rank of sergeant. Apparently, he was terrible at remembering what this call sign should be so eventually he just reversed his surname, Odell, and came up with 'Lledo'.

Jack swiftly negotiated with the receivers at Lesney and was able to purchase much of the machinery needed at a very favourable price. Most of this equipment was bespoke and had been developed by Lesney during the 1950s at a huge cost at the time.

With a skilled team the new company immediately set about an eight-month tooling programme to produce six new models. These became known as the 'Days Gone' series.

The six models took as their inspiration some of the old Matchbox Models of Yesteryear. They consisted of five horse-drawn vehicles and one motor driven van.

Each of the new Days Gone series was given an alpha-numeric code number. This not only allowed the factory to track, identify and stock control the models through the production process, but also became invaluable to collectors in cataloguing and managing their collections.

The first six models were DG1 – Horse Drawn Tram, DG2 – Horse Drawn Milk Float, DG3 – Horse Drawn Delivery Van, DG4 – Horse Drawn Bus, DG5 – Horse Drawn Shand Mason Fire Engine, DG6 – 1928 Model 'T' Ford Van

After all the months of hard work these models were launched to the trade in April 1983. Sadly, and the everyone's huge disappointment, they were received with little more than a lukewarm reaction from the toy retailers. It was generally felt that a bigger range, with more general appeal, was needed. However, the new business had invested heavily in these new tools and needed a return before making further models.

Undeterred, Jack and Bert were forced to look beyond the toy trade for business and it was in the promotional (also known as premium) sector that they discovered a brand new and highly lucrative market.





The Lledo factory.

The DG6 Model 'T' Ford Van had oodles of charm and a real nostalgic appeal. It also had quite large surface areas to allow printing on each side. Companies in all sectors of commerce and industry began to order the DG6 as a promotional tool to help advertise their businesses.

Offering high quality combined with low cost, real collectability and a 'Made in Britain' tag, the miniature Model 'T' Fords began to roll off the Enfield production lines faster than they had rolled out of Henry Ford's factories. Demand grew for more variety but this time the income potential was tangible and further investment in models was sanctioned.

By the end of 1984 Lledo was able to launch a further seven new models. These were broader in their appeal than the initial five horse-drawn vehicles and one motor driven van. Now they were offering the following new releases: DG7 1934 Model 'A' Ford Woody Wagon, DG8 1928 Model 'T' Ford Tanker, DG9 1934 Model 'A' Ford Car, DG10 Single Deck Coach, DG11 Horse Drawn Removal Van, DG12 1934 Dennis Fire Engine and DG13 1934 Model 'A' Ford Van.

The reaction was incredible. The promotional customers were inspired by the new releases and business boomed. But now the toy trade was beginning to see the appeal of this range as well and retail demand began to grow rapidly.

However, this increasing popularity among retail consumers/collectors created yet another unforeseen problem. The collectors were becoming frustrated and angry at the rate of releases and they were confused between what were promotional commissions rather than standard releases in the retail Days Gone range. Again, Jack and Bert reacted quickly and were able to resolve the situation very simply.

The promotional business was the key to volume sale and generation the revenue to allow further investment for collections. In order to preserve both sides of the business all the commissioned models were split from the standard range and were produced with a special 'Lledo Promotional Model' engraved base.

Shortly afterwards a new 'Promotional Models' pack was also introduced to further assist in the differentiation. It is perhaps ironic that over the years many of the promotional releases have become as collectable (if not more so) as the standard Days Gone range. 1985 saw a further major landmark in the company's history as the popularity of the models created ever-greater pressures for the production department. Jack and Bert made the first addition to the

senior management structure when they appointed Ray Penn as Operations Director.

Ray was an old friend of both Jack and Bert, and, almost inevitably, all three had worked together at Lesney. With Ray taking overall responsibility for the operation of the factory, Lledo was poised for further expansion. By the end of 1985, another six new models were launched, followed by four more during 1986.

Interestingly, the final release of this group was the DG23 1954 Scenicruiser Greyhound Bus. Not only was this aimed clearly at a more international market, but it was also the first time that the Days Fone range had strayed away from pre-World War II vehicles.

1987 was to be the start of a crucial period in the company's history with some major strategy changes and key personal additions. These were to become the flagstones upon which the company was set to build on its early success.

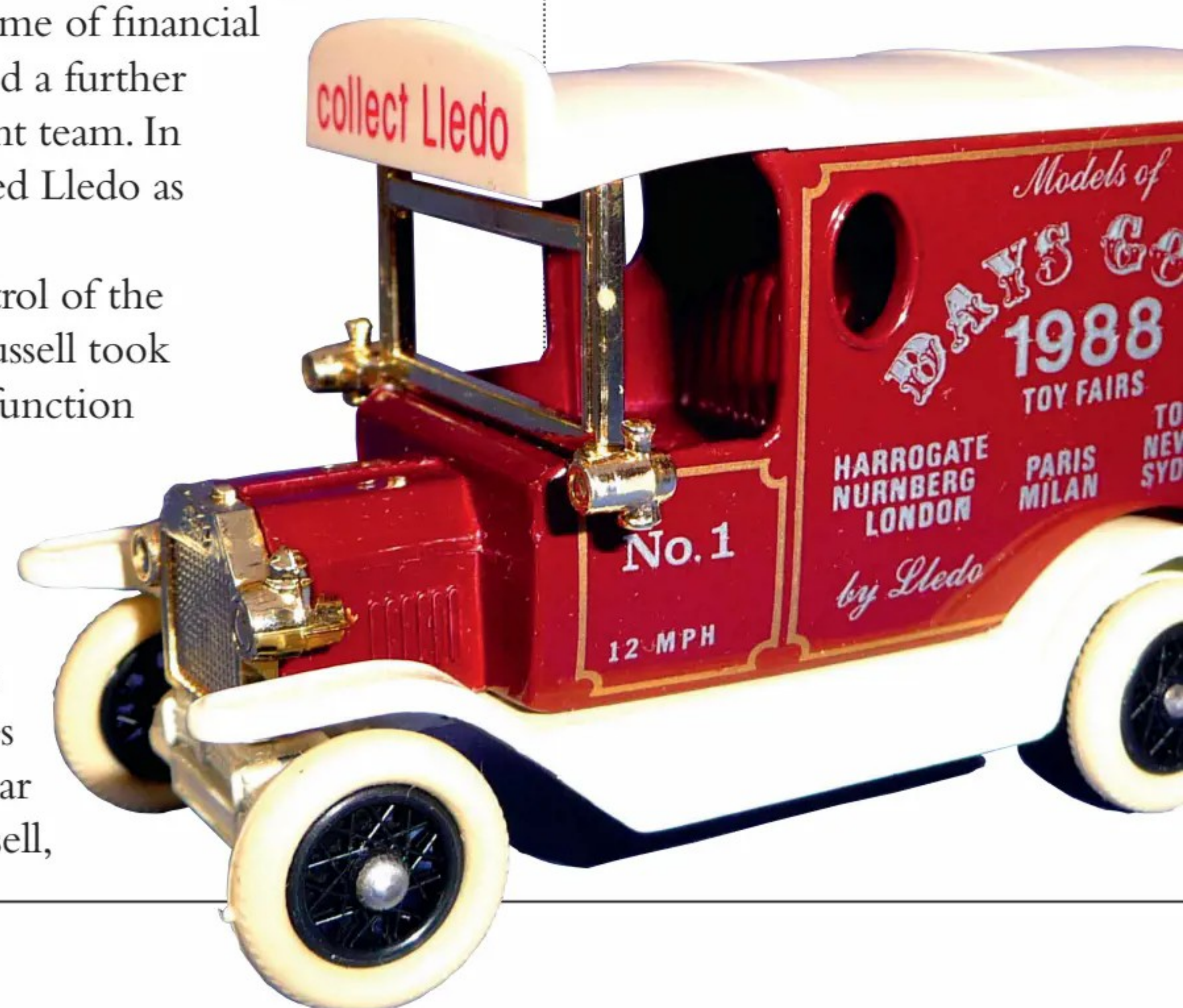
Lledo's management team were all engineering and production focused and had concentrated on manufacturing side of the business from the outset. Sales to the UK toy trade had been outsourced through a company called Saltern Toys, while direct marketing activities (mail order etc) had been the responsibility of a company called Selected Marketing. Both these companies had represented Lledo with a considerable degree of success, but it became clear that neither had the resources to develop the business along the lines Lledo management wanted to take it, and it vital for the company to have control over its own sales and marketing functions.

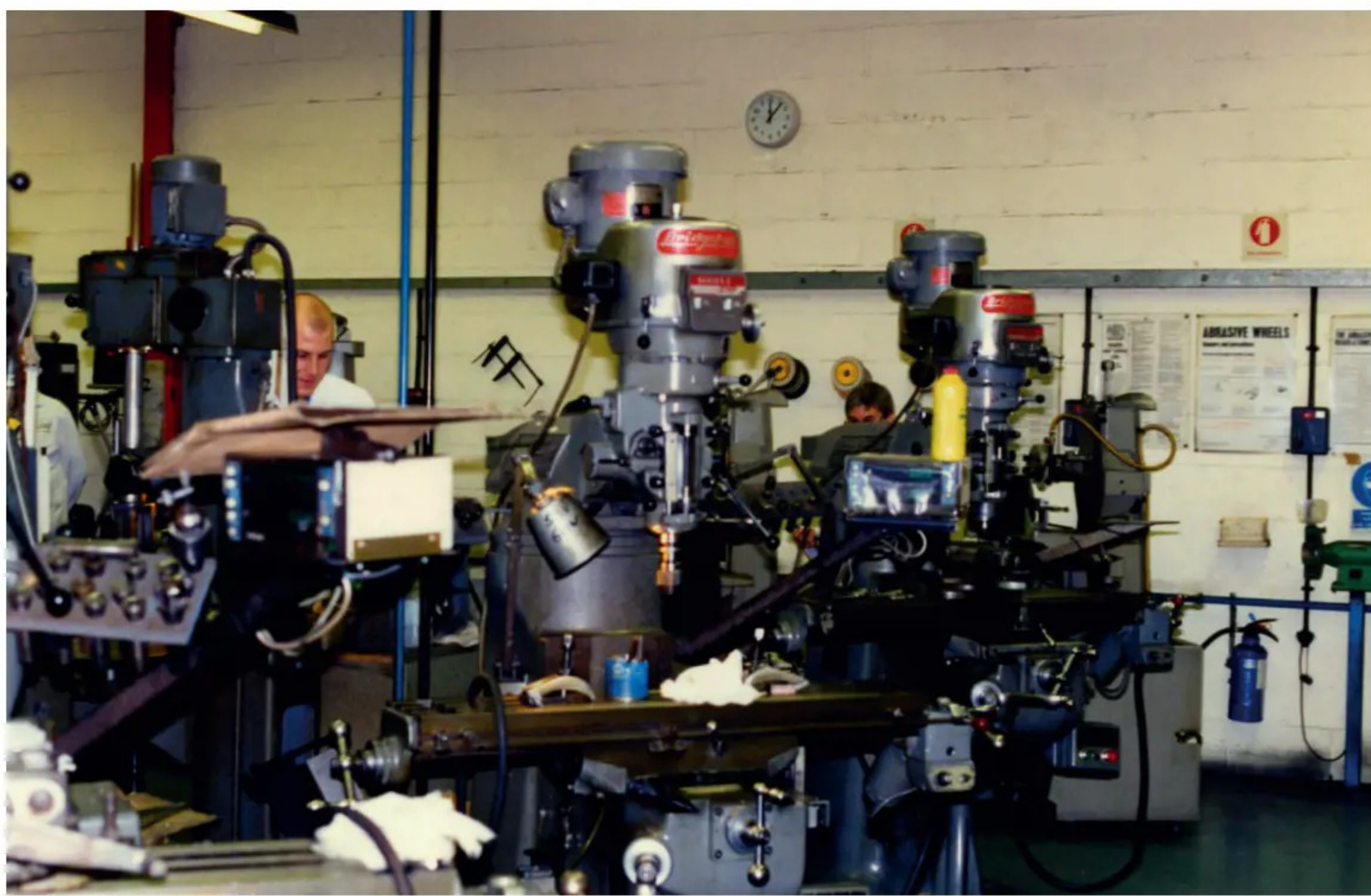
The first major change took place early in 1987 when Lledo bought-out Saltern Toys and brought the trade sales operation in-house. This naturally resulted in a huge increase in the volume of financial transactions and necessitated a further addition to the management team. In April 1987, Phil Gray joined Lledo as Financial Director.

With Phil firmly in control of the company finances, Bert Russell took responsibility for the sales function for the remainder of 1987.

However, the business continued to grow and so, in January 1988, John Rome was appointed Sales Manager for the Trade Sales division, while later that year Bert's daughter, Sarah Russell,

Offering high quality combined with low cost, real collectability and a 'Made in Britain' tag, the miniature Model 'T' Fords began to roll off the Enfield production lines faster than they had rolled out of Henry Ford's factories. Demand grew for more variety but this time the income potential was tangible and further investment in models was sanctioned.





ABOVE
The Lledo tool room as it was seen in the late 1980s.

RIGHT
The Lledo Days Gone release



who had previously worked for Saltern Toys, became Promotional Sales Manager. Now only the direct marketing remained with an outside agency.

1987 also saw significant developments within the Days Gone range. If the final release of 1986, a 1954 American Scenicruiser Greyhound Coach, had prompted collectors to think the range was about to diversify into the 1950s, then they were wrong. When the new castings for 1987 were announced they were all vehicles of the nostalgic 1920s and 1930s era. However, a major diversification from the standard range did appear later in the year with the launch of a brand new series of six modern commercial vehicles known as 'Marathons'. The range was as follows: M1 Leyland Olympian Double Deck Bus, M2 Setra Coach, M3 Neoplan Spaceliner Coach, M4 Leyland Rigid Truck, M5 Leyland Tipper, M6 Leyland Tanker

These models were aimed fairly and squarely at the toy market rather than the adult collectors. But, unfortunately, they did not prove very popular as such, and were destined to be part of the company's range for the only two years. However, the tooling was retained and was used by several promotional customers. Ironically, the commercial failure of the "Marathons" and the relatively short runs of each of the variants did make them quite sought after amongst the collecting fraternity.

1987 also saw the launch of the first Lledo three-piece themed set. It commemorated the 75th anniversary of the Royal Flying Corps and was presented in a special full-colour pack. 10,000 sets were produced, each with a numbered certificate of authenticity. These sets proved extremely popular and set a new trend in themed, limited edition Days Gone collecting.

1989 was a key year for the company in several ways. As noted earlier, the company had always used the services of an outside agency for its direct marketing. However, this association floundered when Selected Marketing found themselves in severe financial difficulties in 1989. Eventually the receivers were called in and at this point the Lledo management discovered that some 10,000 collectors who had paid for mail order models were left with the prospect of losing all their money and receiving nothing.

A crisis meeting was called and the directors took the unprecedented decision to fulfil all of Selected

Marketing's outstanding orders at a huge cost to Lledo. They recognised the importance of these collectors to their continued success and it was felt that a short-term loss would pay dividends in the long term by safeguarding the loyalty of the collectors.

From this point on, the direct marketing activities of Lledo were to be handled in-house. Howard Berndes was appointed Direct Marketing Manager and shortly afterwards the Days Gone Collectors' Club was launched so that collectors could become more involved in the hobby and better informed about the aspects of the company and its model releases. The regular, full-colour newsletter was an instant hot and quickly established itself as a focal point for tens of thousands of Days Gone enthusiasts.

1989 and some key product developments. After the poor reception of the 'Marathons' range the focus returned firmly to the nostalgic era of the 1920s and 1930s. Efforts concentrated on improving the range with new packaging, while the models themselves were upgraded with more detailed interiors. Horse-drawn models added figures and hand-painted horse to further enhance the detail.

However, the major milestone of the 1989 featured the development of two new three-piece sets. These were produced to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Britain. One was produced as a limited edition of 12,500 pieces, while the second was an unlimited set. Both comprised models representing airfield support vehicles from the Battle of Britain and for each sold Lledo made a donation to the RAF Benevolent Fund. Both sets were a huge success; the limited edition selling out very quickly indeed.

But it was the open set that made history for the company. In just 12 months the sales turnover of this single product exceeded £1 million – an unprecedented achievement for a company of Lledo's size!

The early 1990s saw further investment and, to help with the development and marketing, in 1991, Paul Lumsdon joined as Product Manager. By the end of 1992

LEFT
A The DG6 Model T Ford Van had lots of charm and a lovely nostalgic appeal.



ABOVE
 Lledo Days Gone Ford Model T 1920, commemorating "The Bay to Birdwood Run".
 Image: www.delcampe.net

there were no fewer than 57 model styles in the range, and all except the Scenicruiser were based on vehicles of the 1920s and 1930s. Lledo had also won a major order in 1992 to supply Kelloggs Corn Flakes with promotional models of Brooklands Racing Cars from the early 1930s. This 'on-pack' offer became a huge success and led to other major promotions – the most memorable of which was with Walkers crisps. Nearly three million models were supplied over two runs of this promotion.

1993 saw the beginnings of what was to become a major change of direction: the launch of the Days Gone Vanguard – the 1950s and 1960s classic collections. John Rome felt that there was opportunity, both to change the era and to develop models in a recognised scale, rather than the traditional 'fit the box' scaling. Jack Odell felt otherwise and there were some lively discussions on the subject. Finally a compromise was reached and it was agreed that if a model could be produced in a recognised scale and also fit into the standard Lledo box, then it was OK to produce a scale outline. The first models were in the typically simplistic Days Gone style, and there were compromises made to fit them in the box. In particular there was no constant scale – the Morris Z Vans was 1/43, the Dennis Fire Engine 1/64 and the Bedford 30cwt Van was still in 'fit the box' scale.

The models were largely commercial vehicles with the traditional Days Gone design principle of having a large surface area for printing. Despite the lack of scale consistency these models were immediately successful and started a deluge of requests from collectors, particularly for 1/43 scale cars. There was again some opposition from Jack Odell, but in 1995 Lledo broke the mould and introduced simple but fairly accurate 1/43 scale models of the Morris Traveller, VW Beetle and Austin Seven Mini. These models were again an unprecedented success and laid the foundations for the next major change in direction.

Throughout 1994 sales analysis had indicated a worrying decrease in the average sales volume of the more traditional Days Gone models. Indications in the marketplace were that companies like Corgi in particular were achieving greater success with its detailed, scale models.

Bert Russell and the directors were concerned there

was a need for change. They employed a marketing consultant, Paul Warner, with the brief to research the entire UK diecast market. He conducted a really thorough review and his findings were broadly as suspected; that collecting trends in the UK were changing. The consumer was demanding more, and the competition was satisfying this demand. Warner submitted a detailed proposal and the board accepted his findings.

A brand new range of scale models from the 1950s and 1960s was proposed. The Vanguards were reborn but while the range name was familiar, this was probably the biggest and most exciting change in direction since the Days Gone range was first conceived. These models were to be detailed, authentic and to constant and recognised collector scales. To develop such a huge undertaking another key appointment was made. Len Mills was appointed Project Manager in April 1995, having worked previously for Matchbox and Corgi. Paul Warner took on the temporary role of Sales Director, Tim Fieth joined as Marketing Director, while I was promoted to Marketing Manager. Together with Len Mills we worked to develop, create and market the range for launch at the toy fairs at the beginning of 1996.

The range focused on everyday saloons like the Ford Anglia, VW Beetle, Triumph Herald and Austin 7 Mini. This was just what the collectors had been waiting for and the Vanguards with their stylish retro packaging, point of sale and catalogue, were received with enthusiasm by trade and consumer alike. Lledo had successfully moved with the times and it is interesting to note that the Vanguards range, today under the Corgi brand as part of Hornby Hobbies, is still one of the leading ranges of 1/43 scale diecast models.

What followed was perhaps a result of such success and I do not intend to dwell on it. Briefly, the business understandably attracted attention and in 1996 was taken over by the HCG Group. Bert Russell retired, while Jack Odell became little more than a figurehead. The experience and expertise was lost and the company struggled with expensive UK production, and then collapsed within three years. In 1999 Corgi bought the tooling and brand names and the ranges were continued but now inevitably 'made in China'. Eventually the Lledo branding was replaced by Corgi, but Days Gone and Vanguards survived. In 2008 Hornby bought the Corgi collector brands and soon the Days Gone name all but disappeared too.

So today as we celebrate more than 40 years of Lledo it is only the Vanguards that remain as a reminder of a great episode in the history of the UK toy industry. ■

BELOW
 Days Gone model 43, 1931 Morris Van in Bassett-Lowke livery, Corgi DG043048. By this time, Corgi had also acquired the Bassett-Lowke brandname. Image: www.brightontoymuseum.co.uk



TOP VINTAGE MODEL

DTCA Chairman, **Michael Driver**, picks another vintage favourite from Dinky...



Dinky Toys Jeeps the later one with coloured hubs.

Dinky Jeeps

Growing up after the war, a number of ex-military vehicles were often seen on the roads. These always proved to be more interesting compared with the other vehicles around. At the time a boy living nearby had a pedal jeep which I envied – it was interesting to pedal along the pavements, but alas I never had one of my own. The nearest jeeps for me were military ones by Minic or Dinky Toys with mine being light blue.

The actual Dinky Toys Jeep arrived in April 1946 with the number 153a and was in military green with white star transfers on the bonnet and rear sides. The drawings for the Jeep are dated October 1945 so production was underway very quickly. This was one of the first new Dinky Toys after the war that was shown in the *Meccano Magazine*. The advert now indicates it is 'Now ready!' and describes it as 'A wonderfully realistic miniature of the most famous car of the war. On all fronts, in all countries, the Jeep was ready to go anywhere and do anything.' The price was 2/6 each (including tax).

It is worth noting that some of the early models were fitted with pre-war plain wheels

and also the solid steering wheels. At the time there would have been pre-war stock which they used. Also, either plain black tyres or early treaded tyres were used for the Jeeps.

The Meccano Products leaflet of October 1948 lists the new civilian Jeep. It is numbered 25j and describes it as Jeep (Civilian) in various colours. This civilian version of the Jeep came in red, light green, pale blue and brown and had black wheels. The later models had contrasting coloured wheels and all the models came in Trade Boxes of six models. The Trade Boxes were in brown, yellow or grey and the designation was for US Jeep 153A or Jeep (Civilian) in Colours 25J using capital letters. However, the catalogues used lower case letters for the models.

The models are not listed in any other Dinky Toys or Meccano Products catalogues as far as I can find but they appear to have been deleted by 1954. The army Jeep was then available as an export model for America between 1954 and 1955. However, it appears in an American Dinky Toys Catalogue of 1951 and is described as number 153a U.S. Army Jeep. This same catalogue also illustrates the other Jeep as number 25j Civilian Jeep. It does seem that in this case and maybe with other Dinky Toys that at the time they continued to be available but were not listed or shown possibly as new model were now being introduced to the range.

The real Jeep was manufactured by Willys-Overland and Ford starting out in 1942. It had a petrol engine and a three-speed gearbox incorporating a 2-speed transfer as a four-wheel drive vehicle. The name 'Jeep' was supposedly short for 'general purpose' as in 'GP' but whatever the definition the name 'Jeep' is world famous. ■



Dinky Toys Jeep No.25j and Military Jeep No.153a

The Dinky Toys Collectors' Association

The early Dinky Toys from the post-war period added variety to the range and are eagerly collected. The DTCA Journal often features them plus photographs. You can find out more or join by visiting the website www.dtcawebsite.com.

SALE RESULTS

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■ **A Corgi Toys Chevrolet Corvette Stingray Coupe (No.300).** An example finished in vacuum plated metallic red with black bonnet with deep yellow interior. Example with jewelled lights. Boxed, lightly faded front. Vehicle very good to mint. **Sold for £75, Wallis and Wallis Auctions, January.**



■ **Corgi Toys Chevrolet Fire Chief (No.482).** In red and white with blue light to roof and aerial to rear wing, applied paper labels to the front doors. yellow interior with two figures. Boxed, quite crisp and bright but has some marking. Vehicle very good, very minor wear only. **Sold for £90, Wallis and Wallis Auctions, January.**



■ **Corgi Toys 1965 Monte-Carlo Hillman Imp (No.328).** In dark metallic blue with 107 racing numbers, FRW306C numberplates, Monte-Carlo decal to front and rear. Boxed, one end flap detached but present, an early box example, with correct card leaflet. Vehicle suspension intact, very good to mint. **Sold for £110, Wallis and Wallis Auctions, January.**



■ **Corgi Toys Lotus-Elan Coupe (No.319).** In red with a white hard top, white interior. Boxed, very minor wear. With correct leaflet. Vehicle very good to mint. **Sold for £75, Wallis and Wallis Auctions, January.**



■ **Corgi Toys Gift Set 15 Land Rover And Rice's Beaufort Double Horse Box.** In light blue and white livery, Land Rover with yellow interior, 'Corgi Pony Club' to rear 'canvas' sides. Trailer complete with pony. Boxed, very good to mint. **Sold for £80, Wallis and Wallis Auctions, January.**



■ **Corgi Toys Land Rover Breakdown Truck (No.477).** A Series 2 example in red with pale yellow interior, deep yellow plastic rear canopy, complete with jib, line and hook. Boxed. Vehicle mint. **Sold for £70, Wallis and Wallis Auctions, January.**



■ **Corgi Toys Police Panda Imp (No.506).** An example in white with black bonnet and doors, POLICE to front, brown interior, with blue light to roof. Boxed, minor wear overall. Vehicle very good, suspension a little soft. **Sold for £60, Wallis and Wallis Auctions, January.**



■ **Corgi Toys Gift Set No.23, "Circus Models".** Version 1, comprising 6 items, Series 2 Land Rover with blue plastic tilt. An International 6x6 Crane Truck, 2x Animal Cages with polar bears and lions, Bedford Giraffe Transporter with 2 giraffes. Plus an elephant cage on trailer, complete with elephant. All in the standard Chipperfields red/blue, red/blue/yellow livery. Boxed, minor wear only to the internals, with packing piece, lid showing some age wear, but undamaged. Contents complete, very good to mint a few small chips only, hook to Land Rover bent. **Sold for £200, Wallis and Wallis Auctions, January.**



■ **A boxed Corgi Toys No.464 Commer Police Van.** Although unchecked for completeness condition appears excellent within good plus box. **Sold for £120, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ **A boxed Corgi CC99185 "150 Years of Foden" 1856 to 2006 Set.** Although unchecked for completeness condition appears good to good plus within good to good plus box. **Sold for £60, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ **A boxed Corgi Heavy Haulage 31009 Diamond T & Scammell Set "Wynns" Set.** Although unchecked for completeness condition appears good to good plus within good to good plus box. **Sold for £80, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ **A boxed Corgi Heavy Haulage CC13203 1/50 scale DAF XF Super Space Cab King Trailer and Locomotive Load "Allely's Heavy Haulage Ltd".** Although unchecked for completeness condition appears good to good plus within good to good plus boxes. **Sold for £150, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ **Corgi Heavy Haulage CC13213 DAF XF Space Cab, 3-Axle Low Loader and locomotive tender load "Allelys Heavy Haulage Ltd",** boxed. Although unchecked for completeness condition appears good to good plus within good to good plus boxes. **Sold for £70, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ A boxed Oshkosh TWH077 1/50 Scale Hemtt M985 Cargo Truck. Although unchecked for completeness condition appears good to good plus within good to good plus box. **Sold for £80, Vectis Auctions, February.**



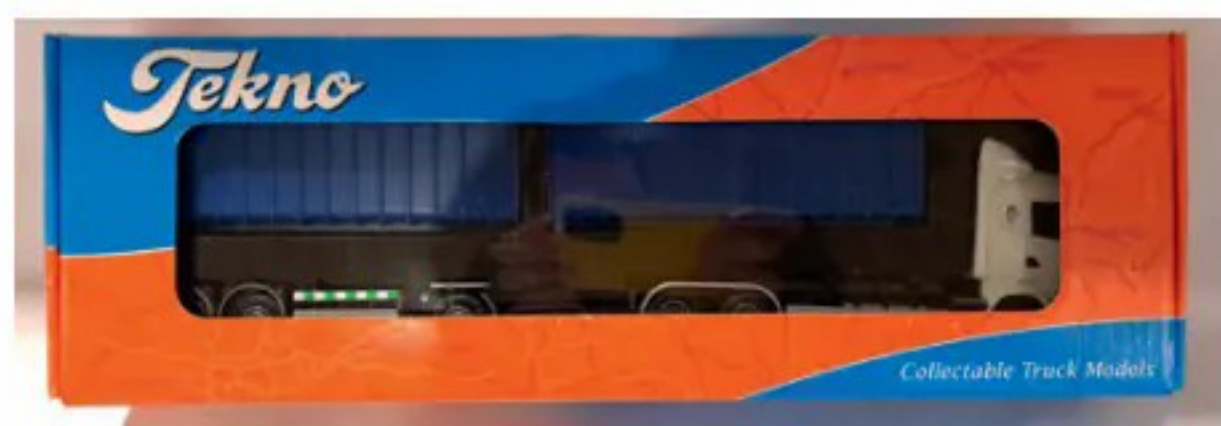
■ A boxed Tekno R3806Z 1/50 scale truck and trailer "Holgersson". Although unchecked for completeness condition appears good to good plus within good to good plus box. **Sold for £90, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ A boxed Tekno 9650A 1/50 Scale Scania MM Transport truck and trailer model. Although unchecked for completeness condition appears good to good plus within good to good plus box. **Sold for £90, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ A boxed Tekno 9660Z 1:50 Scania Creabeton truck and trailer. Although unchecked for completeness condition appears good to good plus within good to good plus box. **Sold for £80, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ A boxed Tekno 1/50 Scale Scania R HL HKRAM TB 9543 truck and trailer. Although unchecked for completeness condition appears good to good plus within good to good plus box. **Sold for £70, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ A boxed Tekno 9606ZW 1:50 Scale Scania Ristimaa Bee truck and trailer. Although unchecked for completeness condition appears good to good plus within good to good plus box. **Sold for £100, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ A boxed Tekno 1/50 Scale "Lapin Kulta" Truck and trailer vehicle model. Condition appears good to good plus within good to good plus box. **Sold for £110, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ Corgi Heavy Haulage, 1/50 Scale, 18005 Scammell Contractor x2, Nicolas Trailer, Bogies & Generator Set "Pickfords Industrial Ltd", boxed. Condition generally appears to be excellent in a good box and good inner packaging. **Sold for £60, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ Corgi Heavy Haulage, 1/50 Scale, CC12403 Volvo FH Fertiliser Dryer load Set, "Heanor Haulage", boxed. Condition generally appears to be excellent in a good box and good inner packaging. **Sold for £110, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ Corgi Heavy Haulage, 1/50 Scale, Scammell Contractor Set 31013 "A.L.E.", boxed. Condition generally appears to be excellent in a good box and good inner packaging. **Sold for £60, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ Corgi Heavy Haulage, 1/50 Scale, 31014 Guy Invincible Long Platform Trailer, Pipe Load & Diamond T Ballast, Nicholas Bogies Vessel Load "Sunter Brothers", boxed. Generally excellent in a good box and good inner packaging. **Sold for £50, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ Corgi Heavy Haulage, 1/50 Scale, 18002 Scammell Contractor x2, Nicolas Bogie Trailer & Casting Load "Pickford's", boxed. Appears to be excellent in a good box and good inner packaging. **Sold for £60, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ Corgi Hauliers of Renown, 1/50 Scale, CC99192 Volvo FH Skeletal Trailer/Container Set "Haig Transport", boxed. Excellent in a good box and good inner packaging. **Sold for £50, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ Corgi CC99125 Commemorative End of the Road Set "Gibb's of Fraserburgh", boxed. Condition appears to be generally excellent in a good box and good inner packaging. **Sold for £60, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ Corgi CC99130 Scotland's Finest Set "Pollock (Scotrans) Ltd, Musselburgh", boxed. Condition appears to be generally excellent in a good box and good inner packaging. **Sold for £50, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ Corgi Heavy Haulage, 1/50 Scale, CC12804 Scania T King Trailer with Tower Crane Load "Thomas Herron", boxed. Although unchecked for completeness condition generally appears to be excellent in a good box and good inner packaging. **Sold for £90, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ **Corgi Heavy Haulage, 1/50 Scale, CC12007 MAN King Trailer & Reel Load "Morris Leslie Ltd"**, boxed. Although unchecked for completeness condition generally appears to be excellent in a good box and good inner packaging. **Sold for £50, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ **Corgi Heavy Haulage, 1/50 Scale, 18001 Scammell Contractor with Nicholas Bogie Trailer & Steam Turbine Load "Econofreight Heavy Transport Ltd"**, boxed. Although unchecked for completeness condition generally appears to be excellent in a good box and good inner packaging. **Sold for £60, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ **Siku 4016 Low Loader with Space Shuttle**, boxed. Although unchecked for completeness condition appears generally good to good plus within fair plus to good plus boxes. **Sold for £50, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ **Siku V 95 Truck with Military Flatbed Body**, boxed. Although unchecked for completeness condition appears good to good plus within fair box. **Sold for £30, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ **Dinky Toys 660 Tank Transporter**, boxed. Although unchecked for completeness condition appears good to good plus within fair plus box. **Sold for £45, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ **Corgi Toys 1101 'Carrimore' Car Transporter**, boxed. Although unchecked for completeness condition appears good to good plus within fair to fair plus box. **Sold for £60, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ **Dinky Toys 965 Euclid Rear Dump Truck**, boxed. Although unchecked for completeness condition appears good to good plus within fair plus to good box. **Sold for £45, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ **Minichamps, 1/18 scale, 540871812 Ayrton Senna Lotus Honda 99T 1987**, boxed. Although unchecked for completeness condition appears good to good plus within good to good plus box. **Sold for £80, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ **Minichamps, 1/18 scale, 540871812 Ayrton Senna Lotus Honda 99T 1987**, boxed. Although unchecked for completeness condition appears good to good plus within good to good plus box. **Sold for £70, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ **Minichamps, 1/18 scale, 540871812 Ayrton Senna Lotus Honda 99T 1987**, boxed. Although unchecked for completeness condition appears good to good plus within good to good plus box. **Sold for £80, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ **A boxed Tekno 1/50 Scale Scania Topline "Red Hawk" Lorry Model**. Although unchecked for completeness condition appears good to good plus within good to good plus box. **Sold for £90, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ **Lion Toys, a boxed 1/50 Scale "Edward Gilder" Lorry**. Although unchecked for completeness condition appears good to good plus within good to good plus box. **Sold for £50, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ **WSI Collectibles, a boxed 1/50 Scale 9446 Scania Topline 4X2 "Fahy Livestock" Lorry Model**. Although unchecked for completeness condition appears good to good plus within good to good plus box. **Sold for £100, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ **A boxed Corgi 1/50 Scale CC99185 "150 Years of Foden 1856 to 2006" Set**. Although unchecked for completeness condition appears excellent within good to excellent box. **Sold for £80, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ **Corgi No.292 "Starsky & Hutch" Ford Torino**, boxed. Although unchecked for completeness condition appear good to good plus within good to good plus box. **Sold for £120, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ **Corgi No.290 "Kojak" Buick**, boxed. Although unchecked for completeness condition appear good to good plus within good to good plus box. **Sold for £140, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ **Corgi No.260 "Superman" Metropolis Buick**, boxed. Although unchecked for completeness condition appear good to good plus within good to good plus box. **Sold for £130, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ **Siku 4014 Peterbilt Transporter with Yacht**, boxed and with 2 carded cars. Appears good to good plus within good to good plus box and carded packs. **Sold for £90, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ **Bburago 8005, 1/18 scale Disney Goofy Mobile**, boxed. Appears good to good plus within good to good plus box. **Sold for £70, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ **Matchbox Speed Kings K-46 Team' Mercury Commuter Racing Car and Trailer**, boxed. Although unchecked for completeness condition appears good to good plus within good box. **Sold for £80, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ **Corgi No.1164 Dolphinarium Truck and Trailer**, boxed. Although unchecked for completeness condition appears good to good plus within good box. **Sold for £60, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ **A boxed Corgi GS3 Batmobile and Batboat**. Although unchecked for completeness condition appears good plus to excellent within fair to fair plus box. **Sold for £160, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ **A signed 1/18 Scale Autoart Aston Martin DBR9 Le Mans 2005**, 1 of 500. Signed by Darren Turner, David Brabham and Stephane Sarrazin. Diecast Legends COA Included. Appears excellent within good to good plus box. **Sold for £160, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ **A signed, boxed 1/18 scale Autoart Martin Brundle Toyota GT1 1999**, 1 of 100. Signed by Martin Brundle Diecast Legends COA included. Appears excellent within fair plus to good box, plastic window has started to detach from box. **Sold for £260, Vectis Auctions, February.**



■ **A boxed limited edition Corgi Heavy Haulage Atkinson Venturer 2 Axle Low Loader in Wynns Heavy Haulage livery # CC12506**. Appears mint with certificate and accessories in a very good box. **Sold for £35, British Toy Auctions, February.**



■ **A boxed limited edition Corgi Heavy Haulage set with Diamond T Ballast x2, 24 Wheel Girder Trailer with Boiler Load and Scammell Highwayman Ballast # 31009**. The models appear mint with certificate and 2 x bags of accessories still sealed. The box is very good. **Sold for £40, British Toy Auctions, February.**



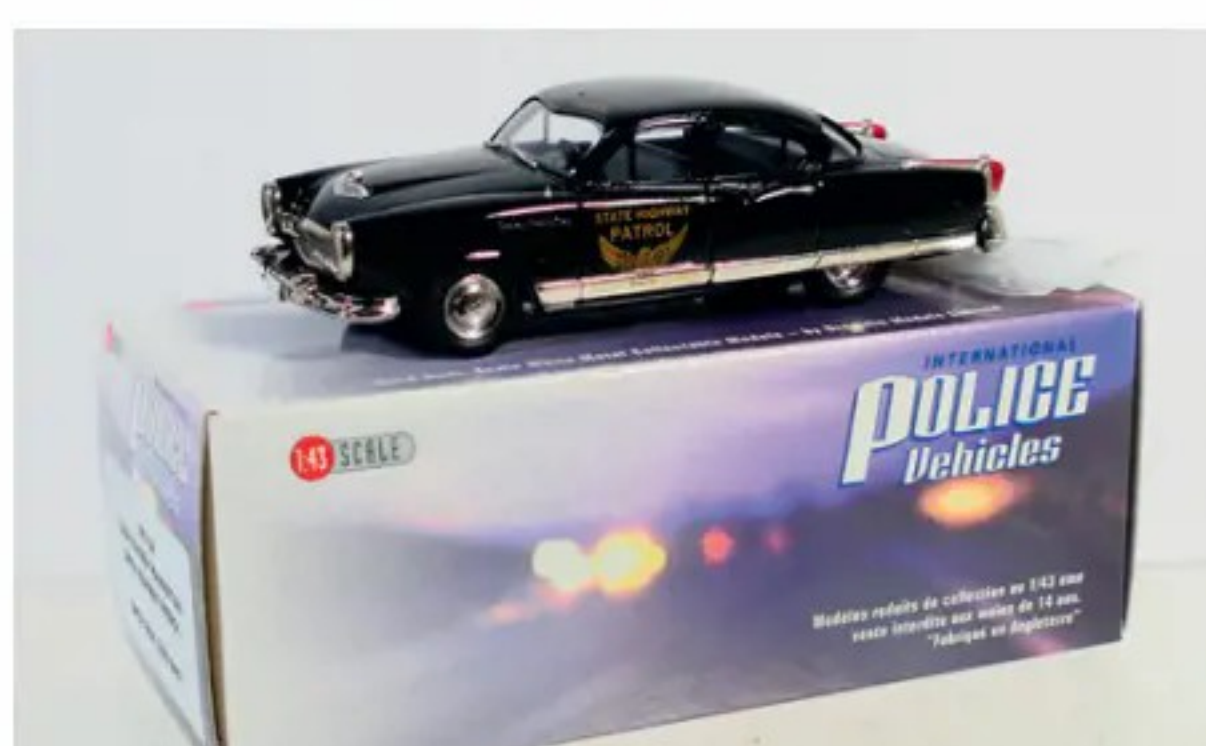
■ **A boxed limited edition Corgi Heavy Haulage set, Scammell Contractor x 2 with Girder Trailer, Bogies & Sheeted Load in Eddie Stobart livery # CC12305**. The models appear untouched and are presumed mint with the certificate and accessories in a very good box. **Sold for £45, British Toy Auctions, February.**



■ **A boxed Brooklin Models International Police Vehicles 1951 Ford Fordor in S.F.P.D livery # IPV10**. The model appears mint with parts in box not yet fitted, the box is very good. **Sold for £35, British Toy Auctions, February.**



■ **A boxed Brooklin Models International Police Vehicles 1956 Ford Mainline in R.C.M.P livery # IPV25**. The model appears mint with parts in box not yet fitted, the box is very good. **Sold for £30, British Toy Auctions, February.**



■ **A boxed Brooklin Models International Police Vehicles 1954 Kaiser Manhattan in Ohio Highway Patrol livery # IPV09**. The model appears mint with parts in box not yet fitted, the box is very good. **Sold for £40, British Toy Auctions, February.**



■ **A boxed Brooklin Models 1948 Chevrolet Police car in C.H.P. livery # BRK.50a**. The model appears mint with parts in box not yet fitted, the box is very good. **Sold for £25, British Toy Auctions, February.**



■ **A boxed Brooklin Models Community Service Vehicles 1941 Chrysler Saratoga Fire Chief Car, Reading Pennsylvania # C.S.V. 04**. The model appears mint in a very good box. **Sold for £30, British Toy Auctions, February.**



■ **A boxed Brooklin Models 1955 Chrysler C300 Police Pursuit Car # BRK.19x**. The model appears mint with parts in box not yet fitted, the box is very good. **Sold for £30, British Toy Auctions, February.**



■ **A boxed Brooklin Models 1953 Kaiser Manhattan Taxi # BRK29x**. The model appears mint in a very good box. **Sold for £40, British Toy Auctions, February.**



■ **A boxed Brooklin Models 1953 Kaiser Manhattan 4 Door Sedan in two tone finish # BRK29a**. The model appears mint in a very good box. **Sold for £28, British Toy Auctions, February.**



■ A boxed Brooklin Models limited edition 1955 Hudson Hornet 4 Door Sedan, in snowberry white and bermuda green. The model appears mint in a very good box. **Sold for £45, British Toy Auctions, February.**



■ A boxed Brooklin Models Factory Special 1953 Buick Skylark Hardtop Prototype, in Pastel Blue. The model appears mint in a very good box. **Sold for £40, British Toy Auctions, February.**



■ A boxed Brooklin Models Factory Special 1953 Buick Skylark Convertible in metallic red, # BRK20a. The model appears mint in a fair box with some storage wear. **Sold for £30, British Toy Auctions, February.**



■ A boxed Brooklin Model 1954 Dodge Royal 500 Convertible with top down in metallic green. The model appears mint in a fair box with some storage wear. **Sold for £25, British Toy Auctions, February.**



■ A boxed Brooklin Models The Pontiac Collection 1937 Pontiac Deluxe Six 4 Door Convertible Sedan Prototype in Golden Brown Poly # P.C.02. The model appears mint in a very good box. **Sold for £40, British Toy Auctions, February.**



■ A boxed limited edition Brooklin Models Factory Special No.8 1938 Cadillac 60 Special Coupe in Midnight Blue. The model appears mint in a very good box. **Sold for £30, British Toy Auctions, February.**



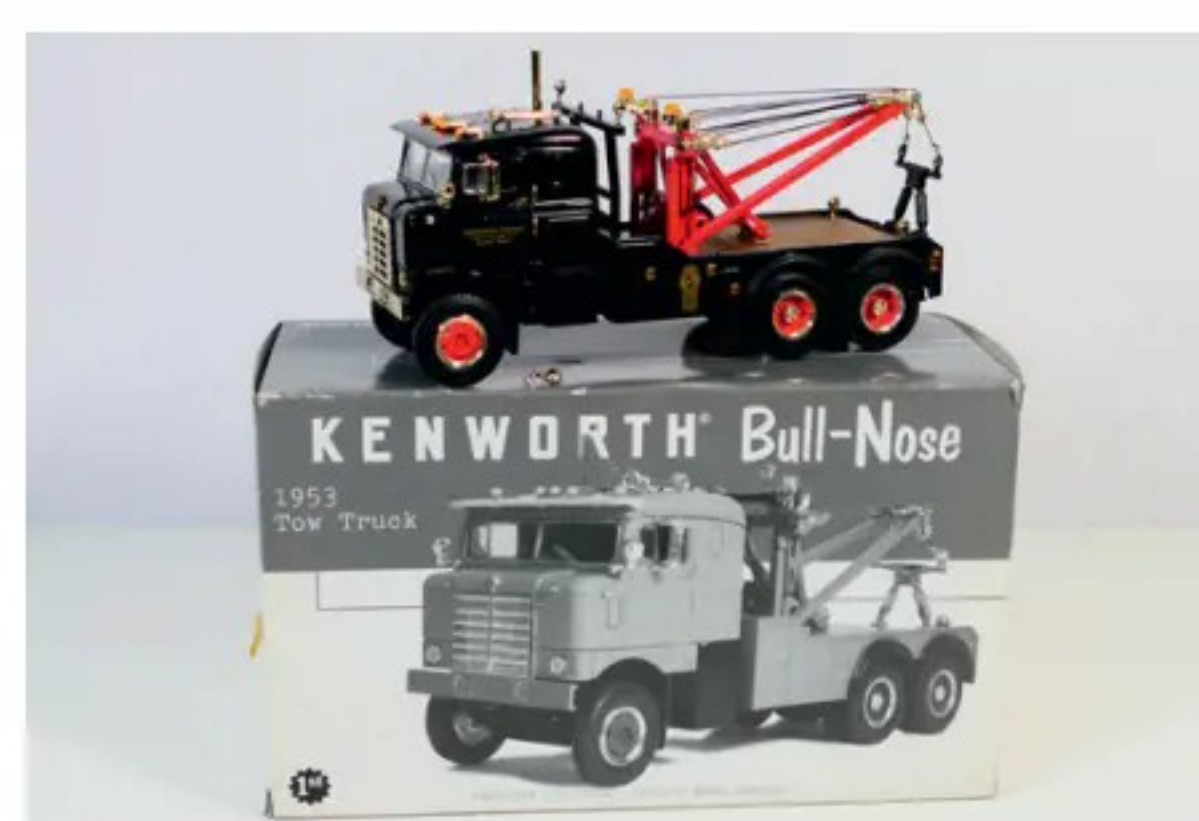
■ A boxed Brooklin Models Rod 43rd edition Customised 1940 Graham Hollywood Convertible, in Chrome Yellow # ROD.05. The model appears mint in a very good box. **Sold for £25, British Toy Auctions, February.**



■ A boxed NZG #488 1:50 scale diecast Kaelble DKV 22 Z8T Truck and Scheuerle 6 Axle Trailer. The model in red appears to be in mint condition, housed within excellent inner polystyrene boxes, both of which are contained within a fair plus - good outer cardboard box with some general age and storage wear. The set is unchecked for completeness. **Sold for £50, British Toy Auctions, February.**



■ A boxed Emek (Finland) #40700 plastic Scania Truck & Trailer 'ASG'. The 1/25 scale model appears to be in mint display dusty condition, housed in a fair box with some scuffs, taping and storage imperfections. **Sold for £30, British Toy Auctions, February.**



■ A boxed First Gear #19-2565 diecast 1:34 scale 1953 Kenworth Bull-Nose Tow Truck. The model appears to be in mint condition, contained within an excellent polystyrene inner box, housed within a fair plus, dusty cardboard box with some storage wear. Model is unchecked for completeness. **Sold for £30, British Toy Auctions, February.**



■ A boxed 1/24 scale London Transport AEC RT113 with National War Bonds advertising # 2920. There is a tiny bit of glue residue visible under a rear grab rail, the model appears otherwise mint with certificate and mirrors in a very good box. **Sold for £110, British Toy Auctions, February.**



■ A boxed 1/24 scale Green Line London Transport AEC Routemaster Coach RMC 1453 # 2904. The model appears otherwise mint with certificate and mirrors in a very good box. **Sold for £80, British Toy Auctions, February.**



■ Matchbox SuperKings No. K35 Massey Ferguson Tractor and Trailer. Displays generally excellent in very good original box. **Sold for £45, M & M Specialist Auctioneers, February.**



■ Matchbox SuperKings No. K18 Ford Articulated Tipper Truck. Generally excellent in good to very good original box. **Sold for £32, M & M Specialist Auctioneers, February.**



■ Matchbox SuperKings No. K5 Muirhill Tractor and Trailer. Generally excellent in good original box. **Sold for £26, M & M Specialist Auctioneers, February.**



■ Matchbox SuperKings No. K25 Muirhill Tractor. Generally excellent in good to very good original box. **Sold for £28, M & M Specialist Auctioneers, February.**



■ Corgi GS17 Land Rover with Ferrari Racing Car on Trailer. Fair to good in poor incomplete box. **Sold for £75, M & M Specialist Auctioneers, February.**



■ Corgi GS17 Land Rover with Ferrari Racing Car on Trailer. Fair and incomplete in good original box, some graffiti pen marks. **Sold for £65, M & M Specialist Auctioneers, February.**



■ **Corgi GS17 Land Rover with Ferrari Racing Car on Trailer.** Fair to good in incomplete reproduction box. **Sold for £50, M & M Specialist Auctioneers, February.**



■ **Corgi GS17 Land Rover with Ferrari Racing Car on Trailer.** Fair to good in poor incomplete box. **Sold for £50, M & M Specialist Auctioneers, February.**



■ **Corgi GS17 Land Rover with Ferrari Racing Car on Trailer.** Fair to good in reproduction box. **Sold for £50, M & M Specialist Auctioneers, February.**



■ **Corgi GS17 Land Rover with Ferrari Racing Car on Trailer.** Fair to good in fair box. **Sold for £80, M & M Specialist Auctioneers, February.**



■ **Corgi No. GS31 Buick Riviera Gift Set.** Incomplete, as shown. Displays fair to good in reproduction box. **Sold for £75, M & M Specialist Auctioneers, February.**



■ **Corgi No. 267 Batman and Robin Batmobile.** Gloss black issue. Complete with figures, rockets x 9 (7 on sprue) plus leaflets, as shown. Displays generally very good with the mostly odd minor signs of wear. In fair to good original box, some notable wear in places, repairs etc. **Sold for £240, M & M Specialist Auctioneers, February.**



■ **Corgi No. 261 James Bond 007 Aston Martin DB5.** Contents as shown. Displays generally good to very good with several mostly minor marks of wear. In fair to good original box. **Sold for £150, M & M Specialist Auctioneers, February.**



■ **Corgi No. 1121 Chipperfield Circus Crane Truck.** Looks to be very good with only minor signs of wear. In good original box, with inner packing. **Sold for £30, M & M Specialist Auctioneers, February.**



■ **Corgi No. 327 MGB GT.** Excellent, the odd minor mark of wear. In good original box. **Sold for £50, M & M Specialist Auctioneers, February.**



■ **Dinky No. 103 Spectrum Patrol Car (Gerry Anderson),** bronze colour. Likely repainted but displays generally good. Some signs of wear mostly to base. In good to very good original box. **Sold for £80, M & M Specialist Auctioneers, February.**



■ **A Pre-War Dinky Toys 29c Double Decker Bus,** 1st type AEC/STL grille, cream upper deck, grey roof, maroon lower deck, black smooth hubs, 'Dunlop Tyres' advertising to both sides, fair to good. **Sold for £110, Special Auction Services, February.**



■ **A Pre-War Dinky Toys 24a Ambulance,** 1st type red criss-cross chassis, cream body, Tootsietoy type hubs, fair to good. **Sold for £140, Special Auction Services, February.**



■ **A Pre-War Dinky Toys 22e Farm Tractor,** red/blue body, red wheels, with hook, 'Dinky Toys' cast-in, good condition, mudguards slightly dented in places. **Sold for £80, Special Auction Services, February.**



■ **A Pre-War Dinky Toys 45 Garage,** cream tinplate building with orange roof, green base and opening double doors with catch, fair to good, doors with some creasing, catch replaced. **Sold for £50, Special Auction Services, February.**



■ **A Dinky Toys 38c Lagonda Sports Coupe Trade Box,** containing six examples, first, second and third grey body and hubs, maroon seats, fourth green body, dark green seats, black hubs, fifth green body, dark green seats, light green hubs, sixth early post-war, green body, dark green seats, blue smooth hubs, white tyres, solid steering wheel, in original box with dividers, very good to excellent, one grey example with discoloured windscreen, early post-war example with small retouches throughout and glue repaired windscreen with added silver edging, box fair. **Sold for £200, Special Auction Services, February.**



■ **A Dinky Toys 38d Alvis Sports Tourer Trade Box,** containing six examples, first and second with green body, black seats and ridged hubs, third and fourth green body, black seats, green ridged hubs, fifth maroon body, grey seats, red ridged hubs, sixth early post-war, green body, brown seats, solid steering wheel, smooth black hubs, in original trade box with replacement dividers, generally very good to excellent, early post-war example good, box poor to fair, dinky toy list in pen to lid. **Sold for £150, Special Auction Services, February.**



YOUR MODELS

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✦ Paul Jordan

My collection began well over 20 years ago, and has changed many times over that period. Some models have been disposed of and other models have been acquired. They are largely displayed in the part of our flat which we refer to as "the study", with additional models appearing in the hallway.

The choice of which models to acquire and display has largely been mine but, of late, my wife has taken a more active part in such decisions. We have tried to showcase various different themes and scales, always with a view to making as many items as visible as possible.

This month's
WINNER!



➔ Greg Peters

I have been a subscriber to *Diecast Collector* for many years. I have a huge collection of models and 3 different circus displays. My wife Sue works in Truro library and I have a display of my models on 3 shelves there too, which I regularly change. Here is a picture of the display today. I have included the Corgi Model Club series with some original Corgi models mixed in. I also had a display in the garden of all the first series of Corgi Chipperfields.

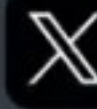


Send us a photo and a little bit about your collection for your chance to be included and win a brand new diecast model worth at least £10*. Submit yours to CollectingEditorial@warnersgroup.co.uk.

*Ts&Cs Apply - Not affiliated with any manufacturer. See <https://ccofgb.uk/submityourcollection> for details.



Dear Editor

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OXFORD BOND BUG

I am just catching up on reading the January 2025 issue of *Diecast Collector*, and read the review of the Oxford Diecast Bond Bug. The run-down of Bond Bug models omits the 1/32nd scale Airfix plastic kit. Released in 1971, and unavailable since the 1970s, it was re-issued in the Vintage Classic kit line in 2023. Alas, all the kits were gobbled up by eager British modellers, and none made it to New Zealand, so I missed out. The original version was moulded in white plastic, and the re-issue in light grey.

Paul Brent Adams, via email

ED Thank you for the extra product information!

WHERE CAN I BUY?

WOULD it be possible to explain why it is each month when new models appear in your magazine it is such a job to buy them? In the January issue you had model excavators, one being a Volvo EC950 F in white and another in black, both by WSI. I have asked different shops and none on them know who stocks WSI models, and I'm not online. Would it be possible to know where I can get them?

Mr Perrin, Sussex



ED There are many model dealers out there, and it is difficult to provide specific purchasing information for every model featured in the What's New section of the magazine. This is one reason why we often include the manufacturer website, rather than a specific retailer. Sadly though, this won't help you if you aren't able to access the internet.

However, for construction models, there are a couple of specialist dealers in the UK that you could try: Diecast Construction (P.O. Box 318, Cirencester, Gloucestershire, GL7 9HN or contact Jon Hall 01285 642432) or DMB Models (contact Bob on 07932 603252). Both of these dealers stock a selection of truck models from brands such as WSI, Tekno, Conrad, and NZG.

Additionally, there are other specialist dealers that focus on truck models such as Maguires Models (contact Jack on 01242 820145). We hope this helps in your search.

JUST A FILLER?

BOTH in the national press and magazines the letters page is always of interest in engaging grass roots views, and a bellweather of the reception of content by its readers. So I was a bit sad at the reduction, and in the March 2025 issue, omission, of such; has it really become just a filler? I can't recall when you last did a readers' survey to see what is liked most or not, but the A-Z lost my interest about B. Incidentally The Dukes of Hazzard has 2 no. Z not one (page 8), so expect a call from Rosco the Sheriff!

Patrick Hogan, via email

ED The 'Dear Editor' page is most certainly not just a filler, we value the opinion of our readers. The page does, however, require letters from our readers... so, if we don't receive any, then we have to drop the page. Contact us using the details below and we will include them in the next available issue.

THE COST OF BUILDING A COLLECTION

AS a 'lapsed' collector and recent subscriber, I must let you know how much I'm enjoying the magazine and newly rediscovered collecting bug.

I especially enjoyed Andrew Ralston's article in the March magazine and completely agree with how little expenditure is required to build an interesting collection.

I'm lucky in that I was the youngest of 3 brothers and 'inherited' a collection which I added to over the years, stopped, now have 2 boys of my own, and have started collecting again.

As mentioned in Andrew's article, and in previous articles, there are some fantastic models from Hot Wheels, Matchbox, Majorette, etc. for very little outlay.

I think they are all aware of the importance of the 'dad' or 'retro' market and our desire to hang on to our youth!

In this digital age, collecting models or indeed collecting anything, is of huge importance for positive mental health and a great social exercise also, meeting fellow collectors at toy fairs, autojumbles, etc.

Keep up the good work, and continue to cater for everyone, whether they have a £1 or £500 (or Euros!) to spend.

Brendan O'Shea, via email

ED Thanks Brendan, we couldn't agree more!

EMAIL YOUR LETTERS AND QUESTIONS TO CATHY AT:
CollectingEditorial@warnersgroup.co.uk

OR WRITE TO US: The Editor, Diecast Collector, Warners Group Publications plc, The Maltings, West Street, Bourne, Lincs, PE10 9PH.



TOYFAIR TIMES

FAIRS

9 MARCH

- **Rainton**, Jim Corr, 07504 035955
- **Lincoln**, J & J Fairs, 01522 880383
- **Rayleigh**, SRP Toy Fairs, 07739 998012

11 MARCH

- **Hook**, Steve Clements, 01380 725322/07732 330305

15 MARCH

- **Oswestry**, Jackson & Jackson, 07967 681080

16 MARCH

- **Spalding**, J & J Fairs, 01522 880383
- **Bromley**, SRP Toy Fairs, 07739 998012
- **Walsall Wood**, Transtar, 01922 643385

23 MARCH

- **Worthing**, SRP Toy Fairs, 07739 998012
- **Plymouth**, Plymouth Collectors Toy Fair, 01752 846250

29 MARCH

- **Brentwood**, J & J Fairs, 01522 880383

30 MARCH

- **Harrogate**, Dalesman Diecasts, 01943 873420
- **Poole**, Steve Clements, 01380 725322/07732 330305

3 APRIL

- **Theydon Bois**, Joe Lock, 07866 641215

5 APRIL

- **Blackpool**, Jim Corr, 07504 035955

AUCTIONS

10 MARCH

- **Runcorn**, British Toy Auctions, 01928 579032

12 MARCH

- **Online**, C & T Auctions, 01233 510050

17 MARCH

- **Runcorn**, British Toy Auctions, 01928 579032

19 MARCH

- **Warwick**, Warwick & Warwick, 01926 499031
- **Kings Langley**, Excalibur Auctions, 02036 330913

24 MARCH

- **Runcorn**, British Toy Auctions, 01928 579032

25 MARCH

- **Newbury**, Special Auction Services, 01635 580595

29 MARCH

- **Canterbury**, The Canterbury Auction Galleries, 01227 763337
- **Kings Langley**, Excalibur Auctions, 02036 330913

31 MARCH

- **Runcorn**, British Toy Auctions, 01928 579032

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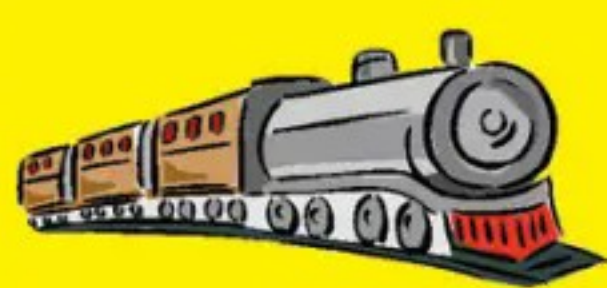
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TOY TALES

Ed Karswell ponders the wonderful world of model collecting.

The depths of fakes & forgeries

If pushed most people, collectors or otherwise, will admit to being fascinated by fakes and forgeries. Orson Wells famously celebrated the ‘art’ of the forger, almost equating the talent required to copy to that of the original. In that instance, he was of course talking about art and antiquities and not about some Herbert swapping the baseplates over on Matchbox cars at the kitchen table.

There have been a fair number of cases of collecting fakery, both above and below the radar. Some of it’s fact, much of it however is apocryphal. I can remember a few years back reports of the ‘Home Counties triangle’ of forgers. These were three individuals who had pooled their skills to fake early Britains’ figures. One did the initial casting, one did the painting, and another executed the boxes. They were apparently quite prolific, and the end product fooled all but the most astute eyes. I don’t know if they were ever caught but if the stakes were any higher it could have been the plot of a Guy Ritchie film... and that’s without the embellishments.

Another of my favourites involved a major auction house and was imparted to me by someone who was actually at the sale. It involved a number of Type 1 Dinky 28 series vans that well, weren’t really all they were catalogued to be. They were subsequently sold to an unsuspecting buyer for a substantial amount of money. As much as these things can be hearsay, the credentials of the storyteller here were impeccable.

The former is also the reason why restoration, repaints etc are frowned upon in some quarters. Many excellent and innocent restorations end up changing hands, with the truth of their provenance lost in the process. When it comes to toys, those

unwary or unfamiliar with the originals sometimes take a lot on trust, especially given the cosy image that collecting old toys can appear to confer.

Most people’s motives when it comes to restoration are, after all, to achieve a finish as close to a factory one as possible. A famous American collector of old called this an ‘exercise in self-deception’ as the item would only look superficially like the original whilst all vestiges of its integrity would be lost in the process. Maybe harsh sentiments when discussing 1950s Dinky toys but possibly a genuine consideration if

box inserts to Photoshopped limited edition certificates. All life is here.

The real problem with all this is that it can put potential collectors off the whole idea of collecting in the first place. Knowledge as they say is power and luckily, we are blessed with an abundance of information, whether digital or the printed word. New facts come to light all the time so even seasoned collectors need to keep themselves abreast of things.

I recently had to do some research on a particular Matchbox 1-75 model. Now, I cut my collecting teeth on these over 40 years

In that instance, he was of course talking about art and antiquities and not about some Herbert swapping the baseplates over on Matchbox cars at the kitchen table.

contemplating the restoration of a rare Bing limousine passing its hundredth birthday. I think he was over thinking what a relaxing pastime should be.

Now, none of us are immune from involvement in these shenanigans. I’ve purchased models in the past only to discover they had well-hidden, yet undisclosed or unwitting, repairs. I once bought what I thought to be a vintage lead car only to discover later it was a brand new, yet well-aged fake. Although I did not lose out much financially, I can’t however say the same for my collector’s pride. Likewise, the era of 1990s Chinese tinsplate being smoked up a chimney to induce ‘patina’ may have passed but toy tomfoolery is still very much with us. From cobbled together

ago so thought I knew my stuff. How wrong I was! One website had so much information that I was able to see dismantled models, showing the models (usually unseen) internal variations. It quite literally absorbed me for a full hour. Joking aside, the model in question was a rare issue so the correct identification in this instance was imperative. At this point I’d also like to thank all the enthusiasts who make these sites possible. It takes a lot of time and dedication for what, after all, is a labour of love.

Now, never mind all that, I’ve just spotted a huge collection of pre-war Dinkies on eBay and not one of them has metal fatigue. Too good to be true? Well, you can think what you like but I’m straight off to the bank to get me a loan! ■





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